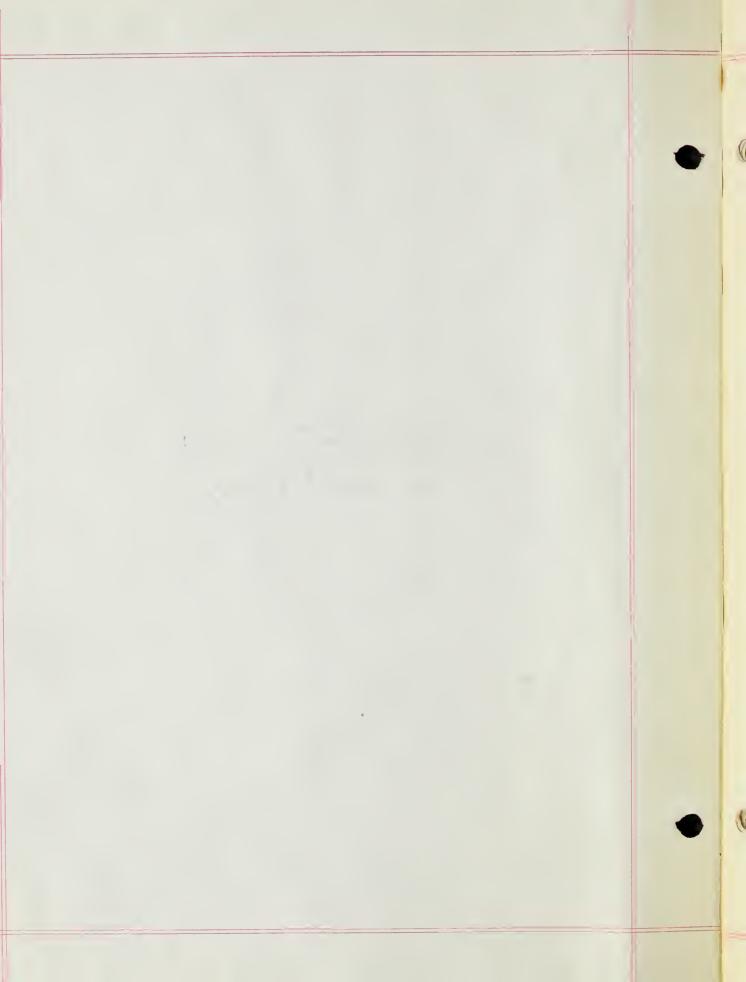


"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning
of the bar,
When I put out to sea."



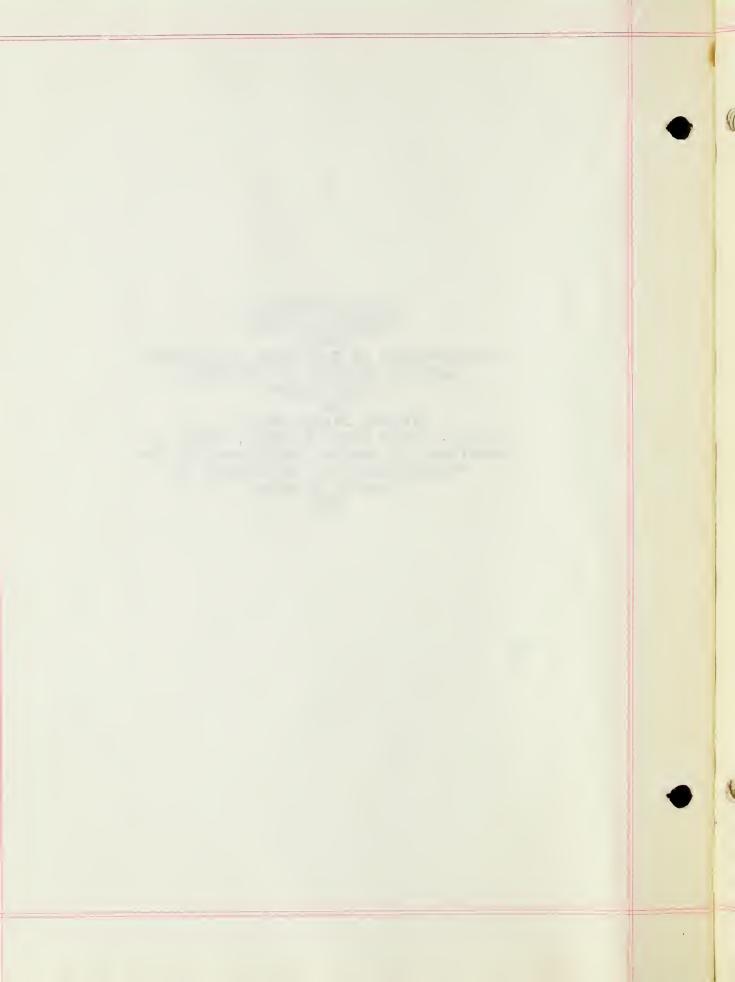
BOSTON UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE LIVES OF TENNYSON AND HIS FRIENDS AS REFLECTED IN HIS POETRY

by

Michael Joseph Welch
(A.B., Holy Cross College, 1927)
submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
1937



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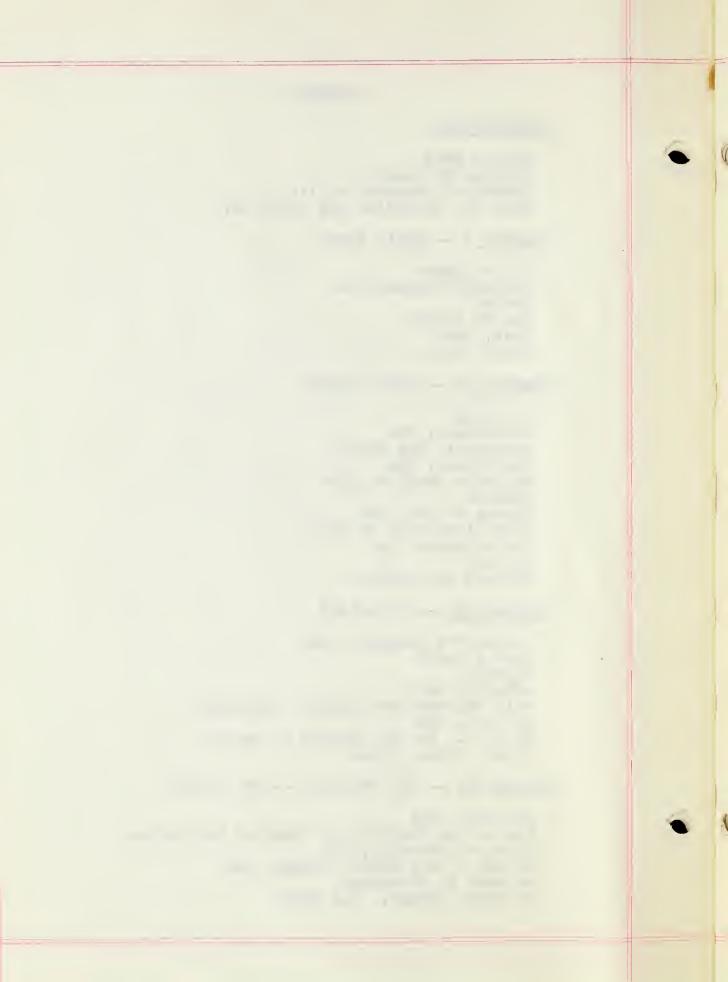
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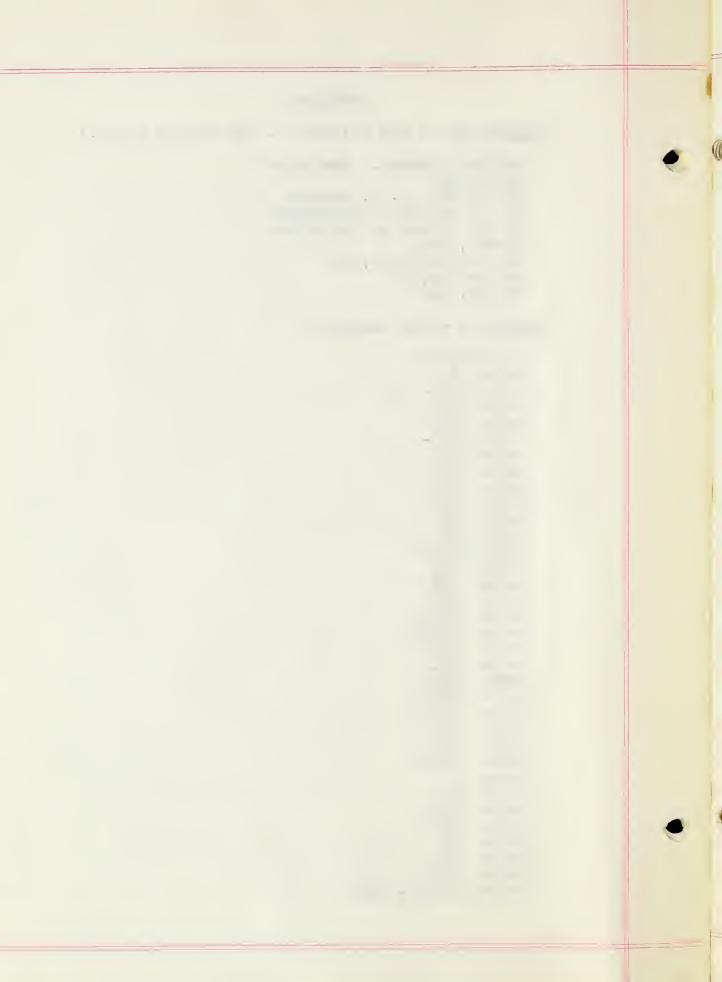
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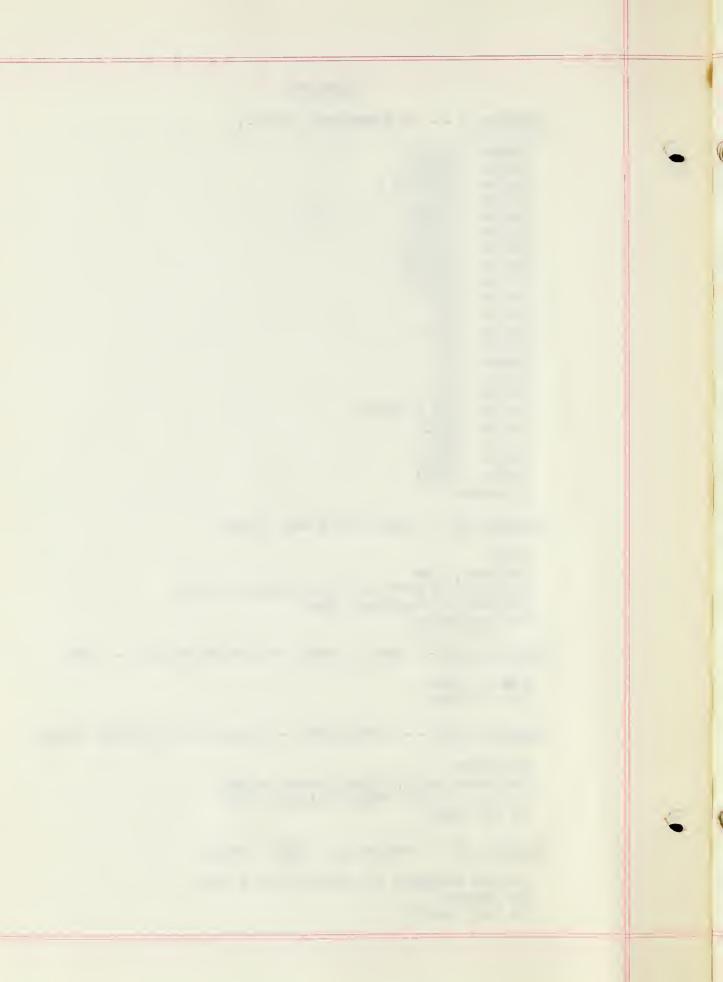
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Summary

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The purpose of this thesis is to record circumstances in the lives of Tennyson and his friends as reflected in his poetry. In preparing such a dissertation, I looked for references to the poet's life. I am also concerned with references to events in the lives of his associates. It is difficult for an author to be entirely objective, so that in many instances Tennyson's personal experiences are woven into his poetry. It is my aim, therefore, to correlate certain passages to facts in the lives of Tennyson and his friends, as well as to indicate that some poems are the outgrowth of friendship.

In Tennyson's works, there are many direct, as well as indirect allusions to his life, and to anecdotes in the lives of his contemporaries. In reading "Isabel", one would not know that the,

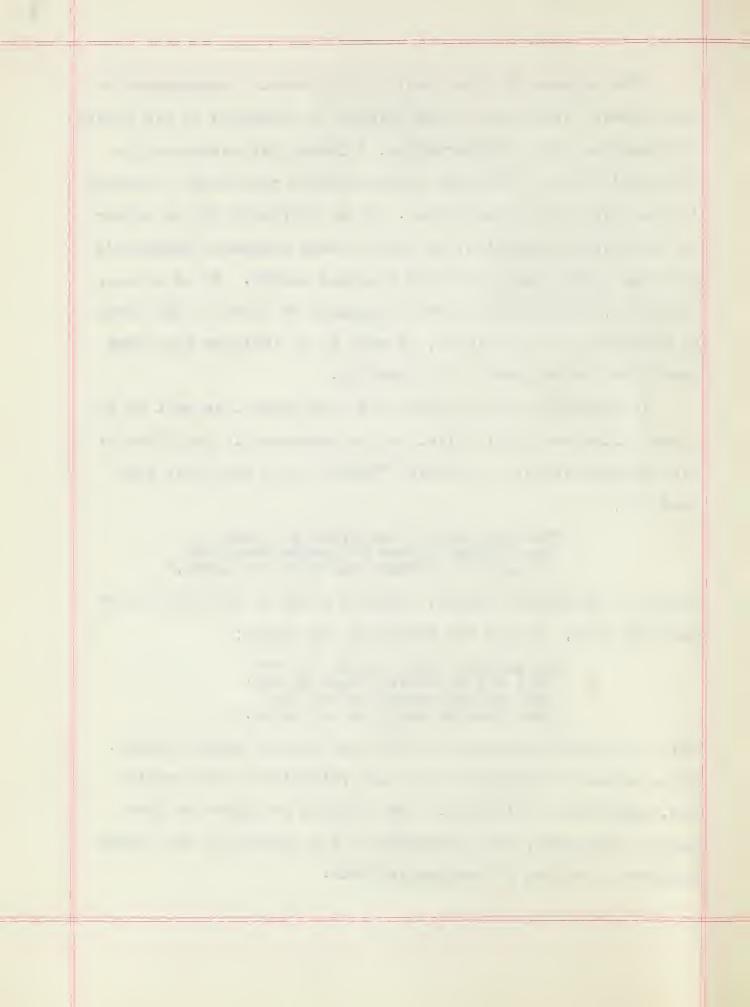
"Revered Isabel, the crown and head,
The stately flower of female fortitude,
Of perfect wifehood and pure lowlihead,"

refers to Tennyson's mother, unless a study of the poet's life had been made, In his "In Memoriam", he states:

"My Arthur, whom I shall not see Till all my widow'd race be run; Dear as the mother to the son, More than my brothers are to me."

This is a direct reference to his dear friend, Arthur Hallam.

Often scenes of Tennyson's life are reflected in the setting and background of his poem. The "poplars and elms" so frequently mentioned, are influences of the scenery in and around Somersby, the town of Tennyson's birth.



In a treatise of this kind, one learns much about an author, who, perhaps, more than any other writer, was representative of the period in which he wrote. To comprehend a man's works, it is essential to know something of a man's life and background, and the period in which he wrote, as these influences are clearly reflected in one's work. It became necessary, then, to peruse all available literature on Tennyson's life. For this reason, then, I am sketching his biography, plus a resume of what the "Victorian Age" stood for.

Tennyson enjoyed his boyhood days at Somersby, where the influence of his home-life played a great part in his development. At the age of seven he was sent to attend the grammar school at Louth, returning to his family home at Somersby when he became eleven. Alfred's father was a man of culture, and he became the boy's instructor until he was ready for the university. Tennyson enjoyed the scenery around his Lincolnshire home. His early poetry is influenced by the vivid impressions of the "grey hill-side", "elms and poplars four", "the brook", and the "ridged wolds". It required many years of close contact with Nature to express that feeling, that yearning, that sense of something lacking, which characterized his poems of this time.

In October 1828, Alfred Tennyson joined his brother, Frederick, at Trinity College, Cambridge. The contrast to the quiet life of Somersby was a sudden and violent one. While at Cambridge, Alfred Tennyson met, and associated with, many friends who later were to make themselves felt in the affairs of England.

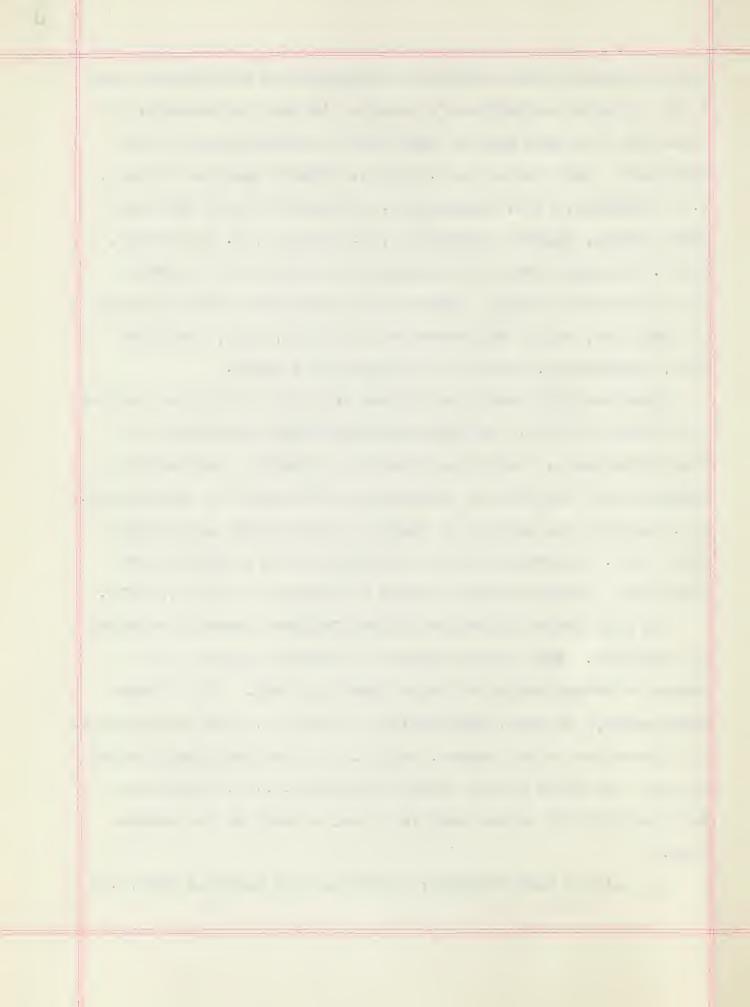


Unquestionably, Arthur Hallam's friendship had the greatest possible influence on Tennyson's poetry. It was the friendship of these two that gave rise to the latter's masterpiece, his "In Memoriam". Such men as R. C. Trench, Richard Monckton Millnes, W. H. Thompson, J. W. Blakesly, F. D. Maurice, James Spedding, Henry Alford, Charles Merivale, G. S. Venables, E. R. Kennedy, and E. Lushington were all members of the "Apostles", a well-known discussion group. Tennyson had continued to write poetry at Cambridge, and it was announced on June 6, 1829, that his poem, "Timbuctoo", had won the Chancellor's medal.

Tennyson left Cambridge without receiving his degree because his father was sick. He had remained at the university less than three years. Very soon after he returned to Somersby his father died. His home at Somersby was not broken up immediately. Mrs. Tennyson was allowed to remain in the rectory at Somersby until 1837. Meanwhile Hallam and Tennyson had parted for the time being. Hallam became engaged to Tennyson's sister, Emily.

In 1832 Arthur Hallam and Alfred Tennyson traveled together on the Rhine. What Hallam thought of Tennyson appears in a letter of Arthur Hallam's, dated March 20, 1832. "His nervous temperament," he says, "and habits of solitude, give an appearance of affectation to his manner, which is no true interpretation of the man, and wears off on further knowledge......I think you would hardly fail to see much for love, as well as for admiration."1

(1) Alfred Lord Tennyson; A Study of His Life and Work:p.48



In 1833, Tennyson was dealt the stunning blow of his life.

Hallam's death was a terrible disaster to Alfred Tennyson and his sister Emily. Other loves and other interests Tennyson experienced, but this first bond never lost its grip upon the poet. Nothing could rouse Tennyson from his sorrow, and he was plunged into the depths of philosophical and religious doubt. Years after, his grief was to find written expression in his "In Memoriam".

The year 1836 saw Tennyson falling in love with Emily Sell-wood, who was the bridesmaid at his brother's marriage. The poet was deeply impressed with Emily, and thereupon began an engagement which lasted 14 years. Tennyson had no income sufficient to provide for a wife, and he had to help his mother and his younger sisters and brothers.

The family finally moved from Somersby to Epping Forest, then to Tunbridge Wells, then, because of the mother's health, to Boxley. Worry over his family and his separation from Emily Sellwood was causing Alfred to become depressed. In 1845 his friends secured for him a pension of 200 a year.

In the year 1850, the turning point of his career came, when in June his "In Memoriam" was published. At first it appeared annonymously. The poem was enthusiastically received. The scientists enjoyed it because it was interested in and sympathetic with science. In November of the same year, following the death of Wordsworth, he was made Poet Laureate. With this change in his affairs, Tennyson married Emily Sellwood on money advanced him by the publishers.



He was not at first a great success as Poet Laureate. A sensitive person, Tennyson wanted to get away from the criticisms, from the rush of the city life, and, so, in 1853, he moved to his new home, Farringford, on the Isle of Wight. This was to be his chief home though he frequently visited his Aldworth residence.

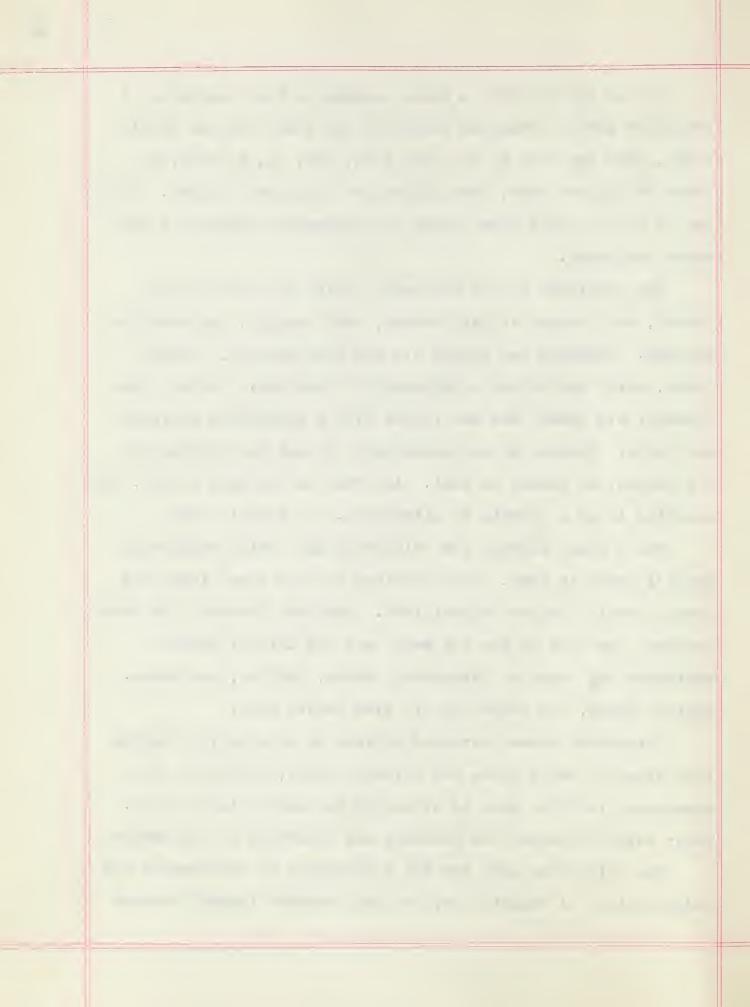
The remainder of his life was a quiet one, made up of travel, the company of his friends, much reading, and constant writing. Tennyson had fought his way from despair, through doubt, until now he had a philosophy of his own. Having found himself, his poetry now was filled with a convincing optimism and faith. Because he was sympathetic in all the problems of the people, he became an idol. In 1884, he was made a Peer. He accepted it as a tribute to literature. He died in 1892.

Now I shall discuss the "Victorian Age" which began with Scott's death in 1832. Just previous to this time, there had been a revolt against "classicism". Absolute freedom, the imagination, the love of the far away, and the love of nature dominated the works of Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. Shelly, Byron, and Keats had all died before 1824.

Literature became strongly ethical in this period, coming very close to daily life, The writers, poets, novelists, and essayists, felt the need of stressing the moral side of life.

Their works reflected the problems and interests of the people.

The "Victorian Age" saw the continuance of the freedom and individualism of Romanticism, but was tempered largely through

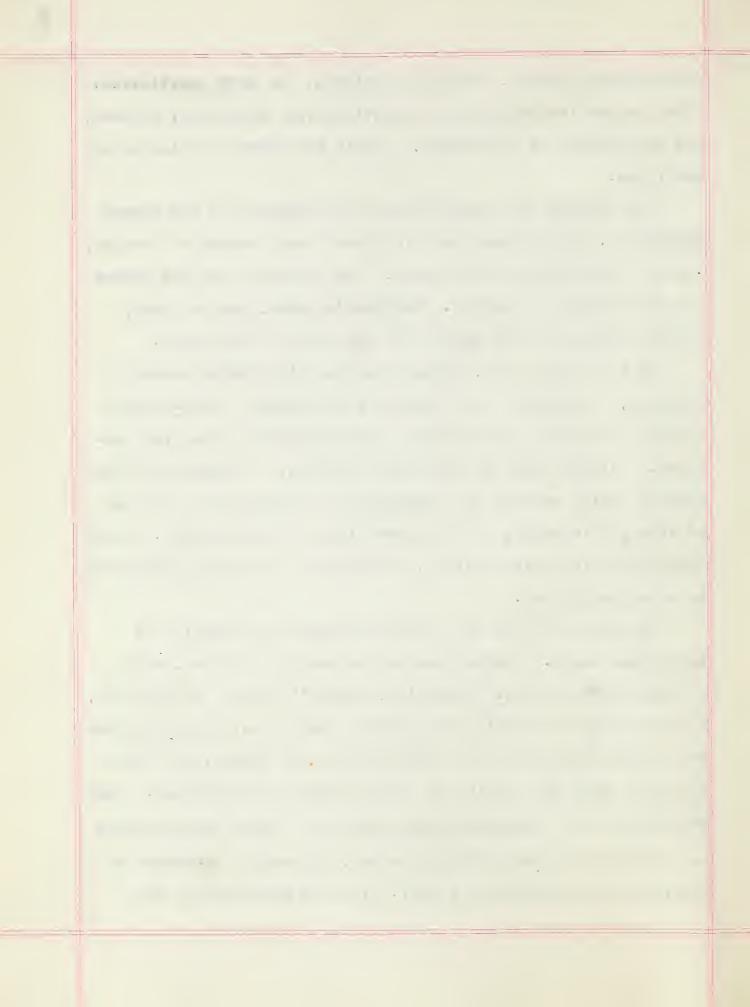


philosophical reason. Freedom continues, but with restrictions. This age saw the beginning of individualism, democracy, science, and an upheaval in philosophy. People had begun to think along new lines.

The struggle of democracy was the outgrowth of the French Revolution. The writers were insistent upon freedom of thought, and for the freedom of the press. The aftermath was the desire for the freedom of reading. Tennyson's poems, many of them, clearly indicate these desires on the part of the people.

On the social side, we have various bills being passed to humanize, if possible the lives of the laborers. Here-to-fore working conditions and sanitary requirements were far from ade-quate. Science began to make great strides. A commercial whirl began in which we have the development of electricity, the use of steam, telegraphy, and the invention of the telephone. These mechanistic inventions seemed, to the poets, elements conspiring to drive poetry out.

The effect of the new theories spurred the thinking of people and poets. Discussions led to various theories, most of them materialistic. Evolution, Darwin's "Origin of Species", Positivism which admitted no spiritual phenomena, Sensationalism, which claims we know things only through our senses, all these tended to make this period an age of doubt and skepticism. Many theologians were thoroughly rationalistic. While science tried to eliminate the possibility of a God, philosophy attempted to disprove the existence of a soul. In this maelstrom of con-

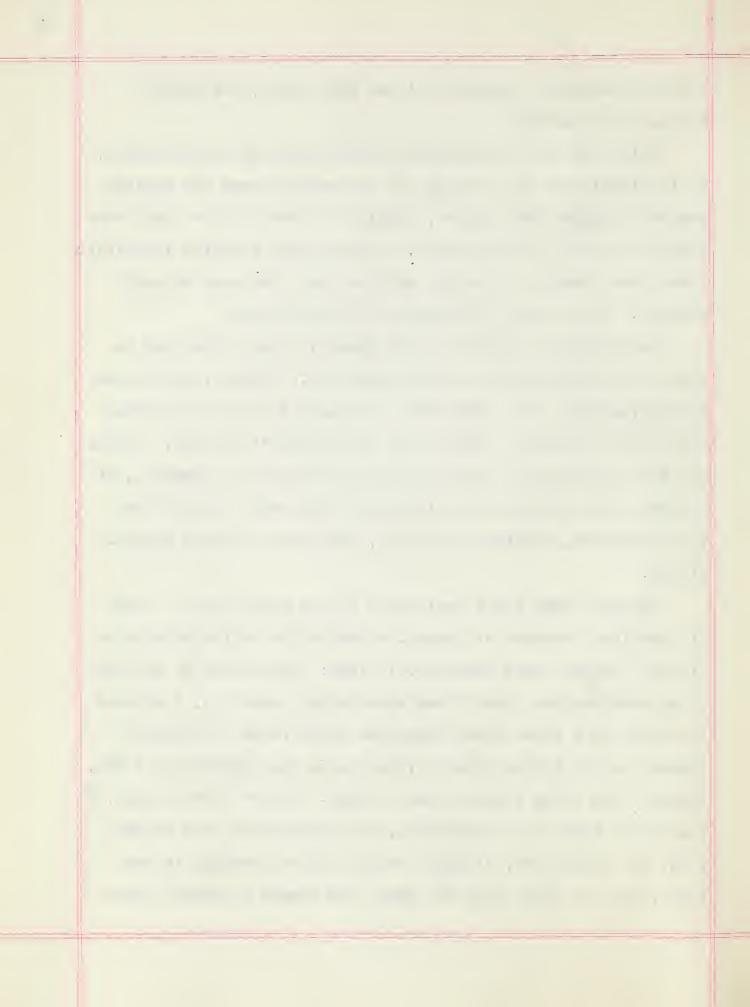


flicting thoughts, Tennyson all but lost faith, but fought through to a new one.

While the age is generally characterized as materialistic, it is significant that nearly all the writers whom the English admired attacked Materialism, arguing in favor of the ideal conception of life. On the whole, this age may be called idealistic, since love, truth, and social welfare, were the ends of many authors. This closes the remarks on Victorianism.

In gathering material for my thesis, I have attempted to widen my scope as much as it was possible. Letters, criticisms, diaries, and maps were gone over. Frequently conflicting statements were presented. While many of Tennyson's friends, critics, and records furnish us with valuable information on the poet, it has been my experience that invariably the notes compiled use the "A Memoir", written by his son, for proof of their authenticity.

Tennyson gave early indication of his poetic mind. About his earliest attempts at poetry, he wrote the following note to his son, Hallam, Lord Tennyson, in 1890: "According to the best of my recollection, when I was about eight years old, I covered two sides of a slate with Thomsonian blank verse in praise of flowers for my brother Charles, who was a year older than I was, Thomson then being the only poet I knew. Before I could read, I was in the habit on a stormy day, of spreading my arms to the wind, and crying out, 'I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind', and the words 'far far away' had always a strange charm



for me."1 There are many unpublished poems of Tennyson's youth, depicting the outburst of youthful poetic enthusiasm and the boyish imitation of other poets.

(1) A Memoir: v.l; p.ll



## Chapter I

The MacMillan edition of "The Works of Tennyson" is prefaced with dedicatory stanzas "To the Queen", first published in 1851, the year in which Tennyson was presented as Poet Laureate at Buckingham Palace. "On November 19th, my father was appointed Poet Laureate, owing chiefly to Prince Albert's admiration for 'In Memoriam'. Wordsworth had been dead some months, and my father, as he assured me, had not any expectation of the Laureats ship, or any thought on the subject." There is a reference to Wordsworth in,

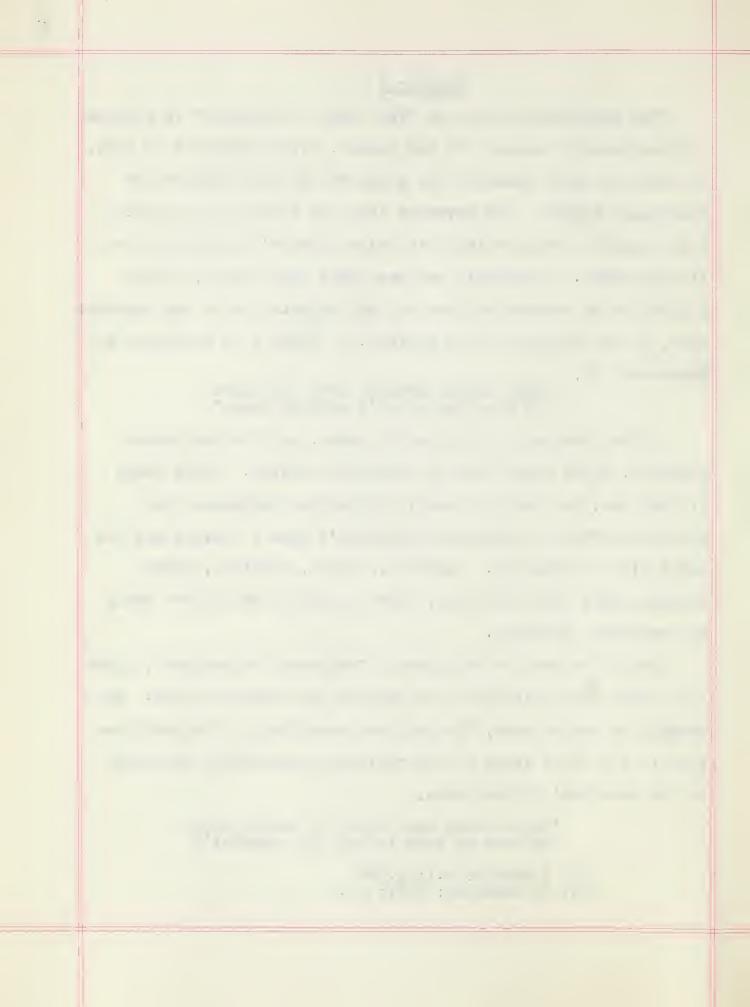
"This laurel greener from the brows Of him that utter'd nothing base."

Alfred Tennyson, in his early poems, is like the recent graduate, whose every word is carefully studied. These poems of 1830 are, for the most part, written for harmonious and melodious effects, reflecting Tennyson's love of nature and his early life in Somersby. Clarabel, Lilian, Madeline, those maidens whose names are used, show the poet's desire for fancy and melodious phrasing.

The first poem in this group, "Supposed Confessions", gives the reader the first hint of a nervous and sensitive mind. According to Morton Luce, "We see here something of the poet himself in the first stage of the religious uncertainty described in 'In Memoriam' by the words,

'There lives more faith in honest doubt, Believe me than in half the creeds!'2

(1) A Memoir: v.l; p.335 (2) In Memoriam: XCVI; st.3



These ideas took the form either of destructive criticism, or of a new constructive, earnest, and practical Christianity." The poem, written at the beginning of the author's career, gives evidence of his new ideas about religion.

In the poem, "Isabel", there is a reference to Mrs. Tennyson, a gentle, timid, delicate woman, who was very much devoted to her children. Hallam Tennyson remarks about his father's mother, "In the poem, 'Isabel', my father more or less described his mother, who was a remarkable and saintly woman."2 Fitzgerald wrote: "One of the most innocent and tender-hearted ladies I ever saw."3 Alfred Lord Tennyson pays a tribute to his mother in,

"Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid life, The queen of marriage, the most perfect wife."

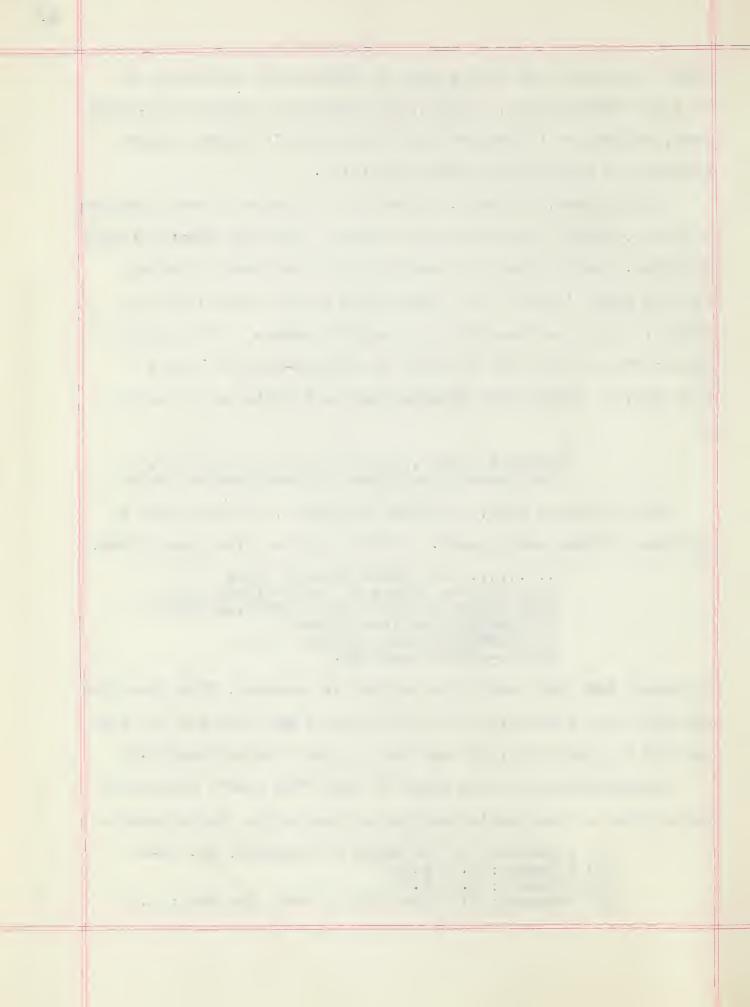
The following poem, the "Ode to Memory", was dedicated to the days of Tennyson's youth. In this work we find these lines:

".....a garden bower'd close
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,
Long alleys falling down to twilight grots
Or opening upon level plots
Of crowing lilies, standing near
Purple-spiked lavendar."

Elizabeth Cary says about the rectory at Somersby, "The place has not been well kept up, and to see it as it was with the old garden and the lost view, we must turn to the "Ode to Memory".4

Continuing on in this group we find "The Poet", Tennyson's declaration of the poet's position in the world. He believed a

- (1) A Handbook to the Works of Tennyson: pp. 80-81
- (2) A Memoir: v.l; p.17 (3) A Memoir: v.l; p.18
- (4) Tennyson; His Home, His Friends, His Work: p.3



poet one of the civilizing forces of the world. "In this poem, Tennyson lays down, and out of his own inward experience, what he conceived himself to be, and how he conceived his work,

'The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.'"

When we consider that these thoughts were advanced by a young man, we must admit the force of his contentions. Poetry was now to serve a purpose. It was to be a vehicle for the expression of man's thoughts. Such outstanding and daring courage characterized the youthful ambition of Tennyson.

"The poet, then, is to enrich the hope and youth of the world, not to be merely a source of immediate pleasure and enlightment, but a seminal principle from which truths germinate, and propagate themselves as truth always does. Tennyson lived to write many more beautiful poems than this, but none more significant. How utterly different from the old view of poetry as a decorative art, beautifying the mind with the fancies of fiction, which must never-the-less be corrected, as occasion required by the more serious and sober faculties!"2

Tennyson was only twenty-one when he wrote that poetry must be a means for the propagation of truth and for aiding the alliance of wisdom and human freedom.

The "Poet's Mind", the last piece dealt with in this chapter, is a retort to some critics. In this poem Tennyson uses some pretty strong language. The thought of this poem "was suggested",

(1) Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life; p.70

(2) Alfred Tennyson; How to Know Him; pp.7-8



it is said, "by the disparaging remarks of some university friend.

It is strongly earnest."1

(1) Handbook to the Works of Alfred Tennyson: p.3



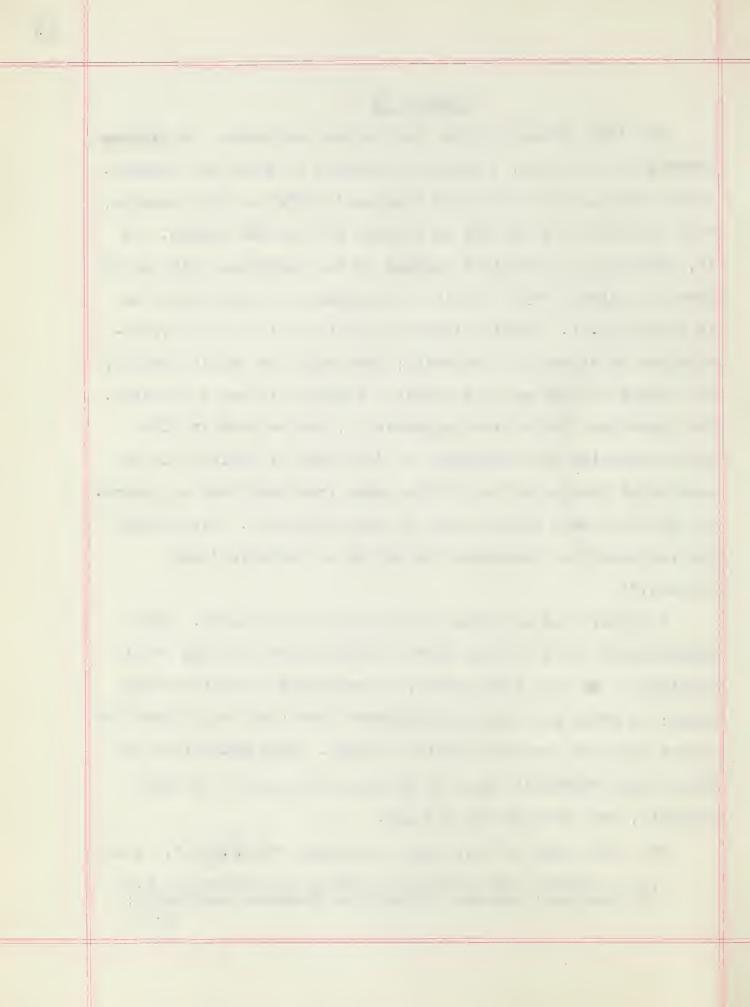
## Chapter II

The 1832 volume created conflicting reactions. To express clearly the opinions, I deem it necessary to quote two authors. Authur Waugh, in his study of Tennyson's life and work remarks, "The book was in every way an advance on the 1830 volume. It is, moreover, an excellent example of the perfection with which Tennyson catches every detail in the phase of nature which he is picturing. "1. Harold Nicolson is not so kind in his criticism, for he states the following: "For with the British public, the volume of 1832 was not merely a failure; it was a disaster. The Cambridge circle alone approved it, and we read of Fitzgerald mumbling the assonances of 'The Lady of Shalott' in the dawn while driving on top of the coach from Cambridge to London. The Apostles were almost alone in their approval. Even before the reviewers had condemned the volume as 'affected' and obscure."2

I believe the criticism of Nicolson is too harsh. Only twenty-three years of age, Alfred Tennyson gave promise of his greatness. In this 1832 volume, he developed thought already begun; he wrote on fresh and different ideas; and he infused his poetry with the creative spirit of youth. This enthusiasm and desire for originality were to permeate the work of the Poet Laureate, even through his old age.

The first poem of this group discussed, "To J.M.K.", is an

(1) A Handbook to the Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson; p.95
(2) Tennyson; Aspects of His Life Character and Poetry:
p.111



early sonnet, dedicated to John Mitchell Kemble, who attended Cambridge with Tennyson, and afterwards became known as an authority in early English literature and history.

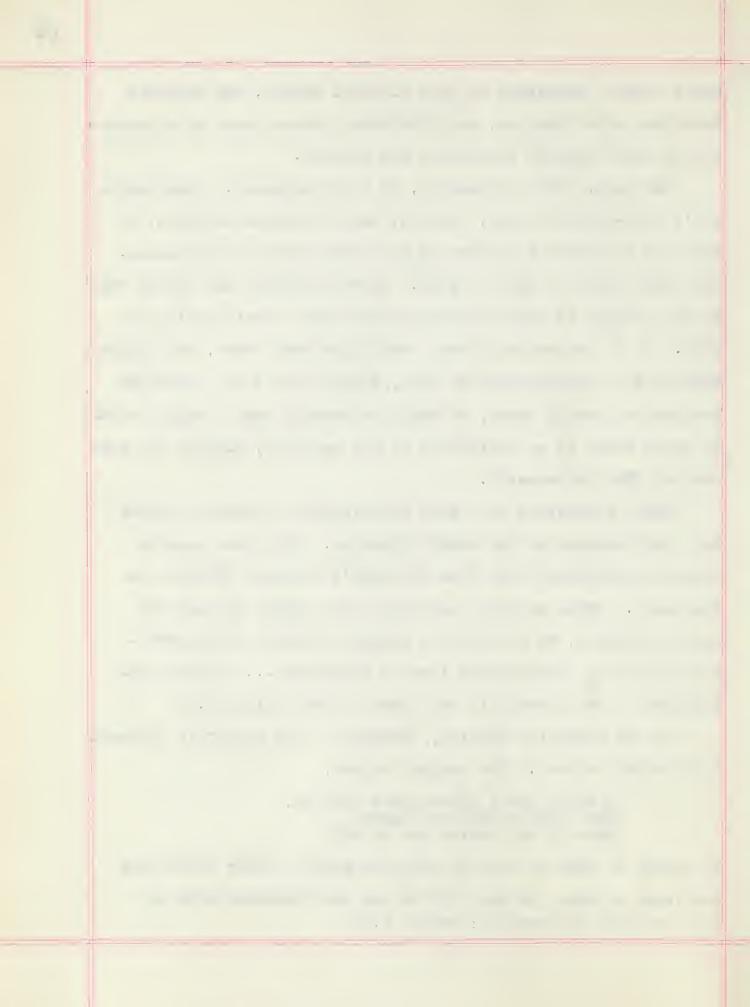
The poem, "The Bridesmaid", is a bit personal. When Tennyson's best-loved brother, Charles, married Louisa Sellwood, Alfred had the honor of escorting his future wife as bridesmaid. This took place on May 24, 1836. Alfred Tennyson had rarely been in the company of Emily Sellwood since their first meeting in 1830. Is it any wonder, then, that these two lovers, kept apart through the circumstances of fate, should feel a bit saddened? Tennyson's closing words, "O happy bridesmaid make a happy bride!" in which there is an intimation to his own life, suggest the keynote of "The Bridesmaid".

Those interested in a good description of southern France may find "Mariana in the South" pleasing. This poem records outward experiences more than the poet's personal feelings in "Mariana". "When we were journeying this summer through the South of France, we came upon a range of country just corresponding to his preconceived idea of barrenness... and the portraiture of the scenery in this poem is most faithful."1

In the MacMillan edition, "Mariana in the South" is followed by "The Two Voices". The opening stanza,

"A still small voice spake unto me, 'Thou art so full of misery', Were it not better not to be?"

is enough to make us realize that the poet is under a terrible emotional strain. He was, for he had been burdened with an (1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.885



over-whelming sorrow, the death of his friend, Arthur Hallam.

It describes the conflict in a soul between faith and doubt.

"Thoughts of a Suicide", this poem is also called. One can see why. Of "The Two Voices", Spedding says, "In 'The Two Voices', we have a history of the agitations, the suggestions and counter-suggestions of a mind sunk in hopeless despondency, meditating self-destruction, together with the manner of its recovery to a more healthy condition. "I

About this poem Tennyson himself has left the following:
"When I wrote 'The Two Voices' I was so utterly miserable a
burden to myself and to my family, that I said 'Is life worth
anything?' and now that I am too old, I fear that I shall only
live a year or two, for I have work still to do."2

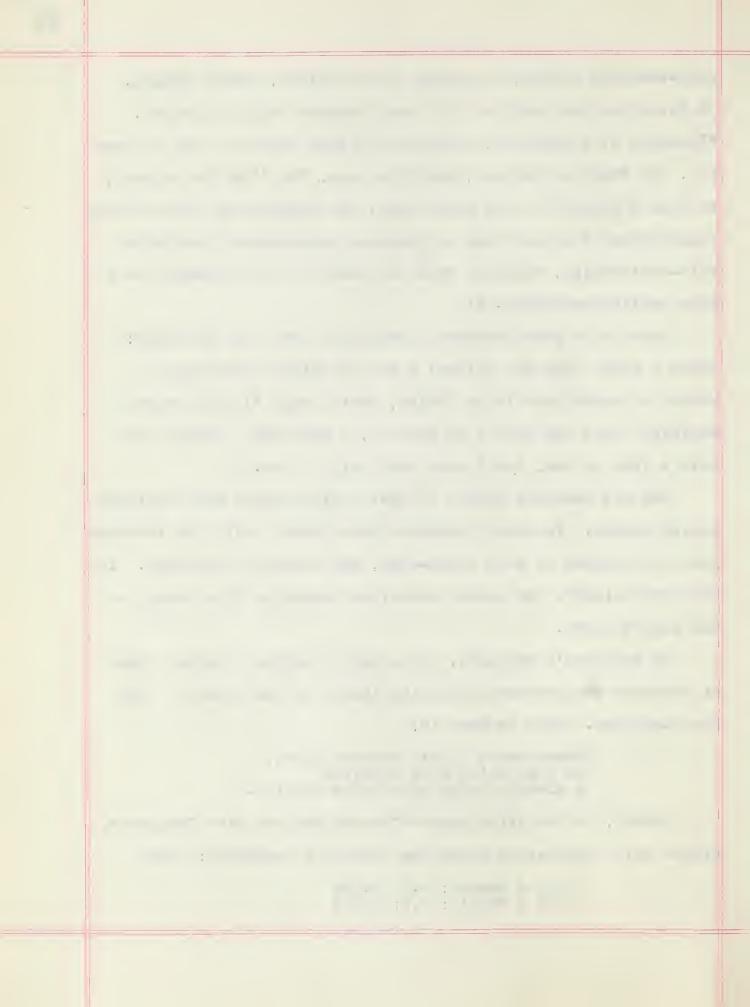
The old Somersby church is just a picturesque old-fashioned parish church. Tennyson remembers this church, with its thatched roof, and around it were witch-elms, and towering sycamores. In "The Two Voices", the church described resembles this church of the poet's youth.

In Tennyson's struggle, the scene of Hallam's burial place at Clevedon was constantly forcing itself on the memory of the Poet Laureate. This is seen in:

"Sometimes a little corner shines, As over rainy mist inclines A gleaming crag with belts of pine."

Huckel, in his pilgrimmage "Through England With Tennyson", offers this explanation about the "Miller's Daughter": "Near

(1) A Memoir: v.l; p.193 (2) A Memoir: v.l; p.193

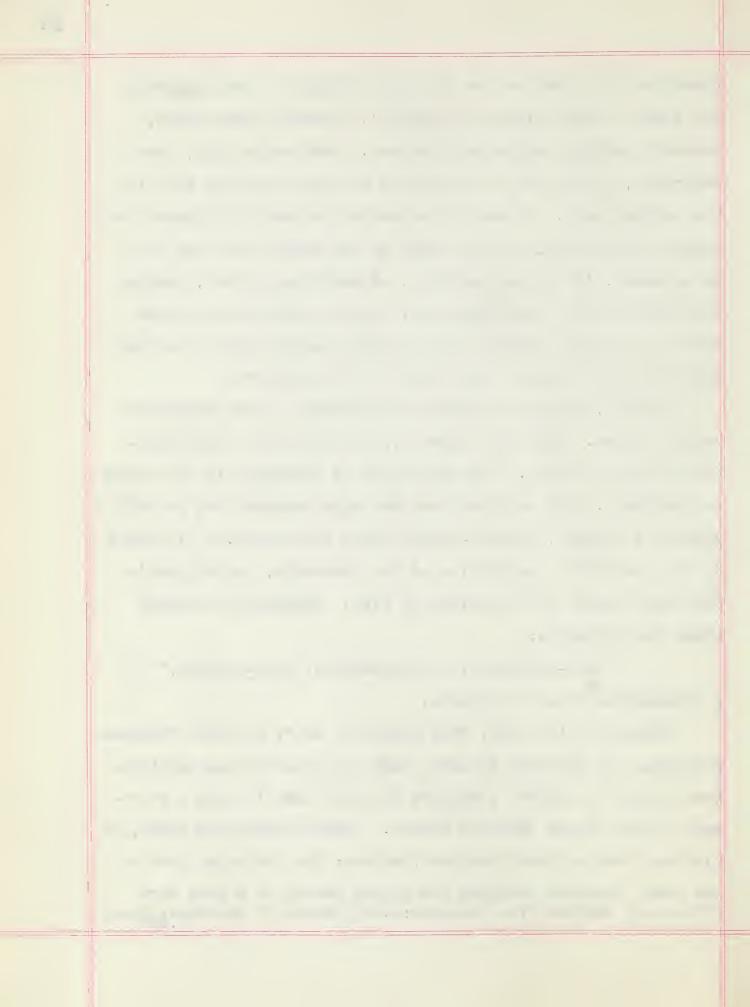


Cambridge is a picturesque mill that claims to have suggested the scene of !The Miller's Daughter'. Several other mills, however, probably suggested the poem. Stockworth Mill, near Cambridge, is the one that Tennyson was very familiar with in his student days. He was rather averse to having his poems too closely identified, and once when he was asked about the mill he answered, 'If it was anywhere, it was Trumpington', meaning Granchester Mill, near Cambridge, but also implying by those words 'if it was anywhere' that it was scarcely more this than the other picturesque mills that he had in mind."1

In 1830, Tennyson visited the Pyrenees, in the company of Arthur Hallam. From this time on, his poetry felt the influence of this journey. "He wrote part of 'Oeonone' in the valley of Cauteretz. His sojourn there was also commemorated in 'All Along the Valley', one-and-thirty years afterwards."2 Included in this beautiful description of the landscape, is the poet's own moral creed, his principle of life. Tennyson has Pallas state the following:

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control," a standard he tried to achieve.

Concerning the poem, "The Palace of Art", in which Tennyson propounds his personal thought, that the artistic and intellectual should be united, I believe the poet kept in mind a statement of his friend Richard Trench. Raymond Macdonald Alden, in his book "How to Know Tennyson", writes: "As his later note to the poem, Tennyson recorded the simple memory of a good word (1) Through England With Tennyson:p.55(2) Works of Tennyson:notes; p.88?



spoken to him in college days by his friend Richard Trench, 'Tennyson, we cannot live in Art'!!!

Another work included in this group is identified by the two lines,

"The lion on your old stone gates Is not more cold to you than I",

which suggest the identity of the character in the poem "Lady Clara Vere de Vere". "The poem 'Lady Clara Vere de Vere' is probably suggested by Scrivelsby Court, in this same region, 2 a seat of the Dymoke family, where there are famous lions on the gate."3

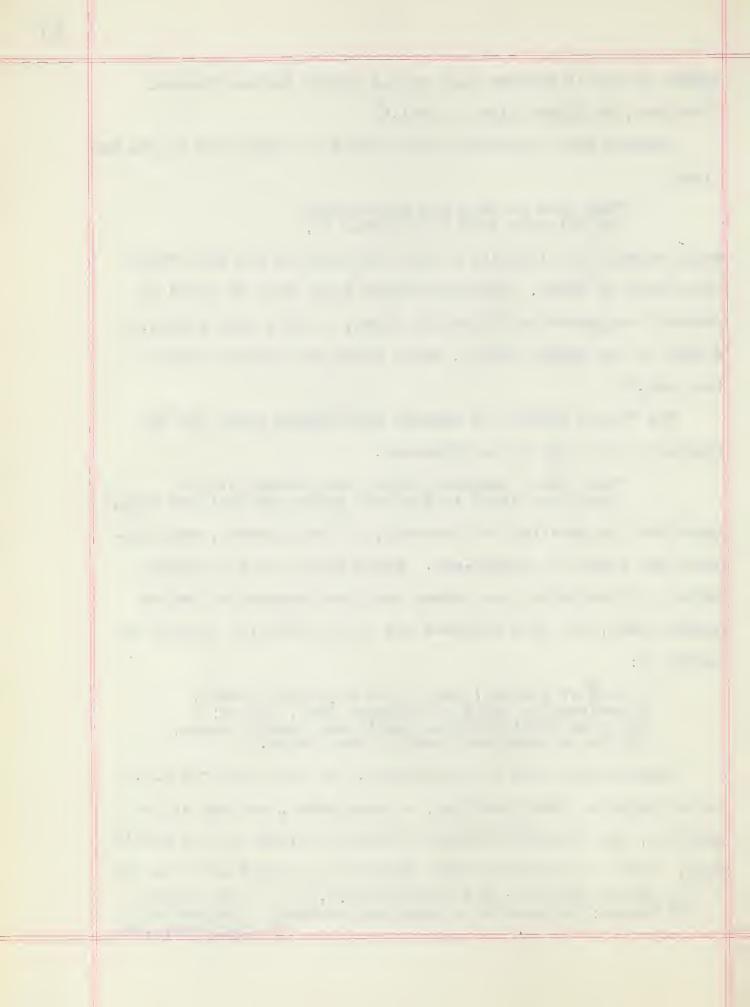
The "Lotos Eaters" is another poem coming under the influence of his trip to the Pyrenees.

"And like a downward smoke, the slender stream Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem," describes the waterfall at Gavarnie, in the Pyrenees, when Tennyson was twenty or twenty-one. Lying among these mountains before this waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, the poet sketched one of his favorite figures of speech in:

"A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke, Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go; And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke, Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below."

Tennyson was fond of his friends. We find that "To J.S." is dedicated to James Spedding, a school-mate, and one of the Apostles, who afterwards became a kindly reviewer of the poet's work. Until his death in 1881, Spedding continued to be one of

(1) Alfred Tennyson; How to Know Him:p.14 (3) Through
(2) Region: Harncastle; a town near Somersby England with
Tennyson; p.49



Tennyson's intimate friends. When Tennyson wrote this, he had lost his father and so he says,

"......Alas!
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;
Once through my own doors Death did pass;
One went, who never hath return'd."

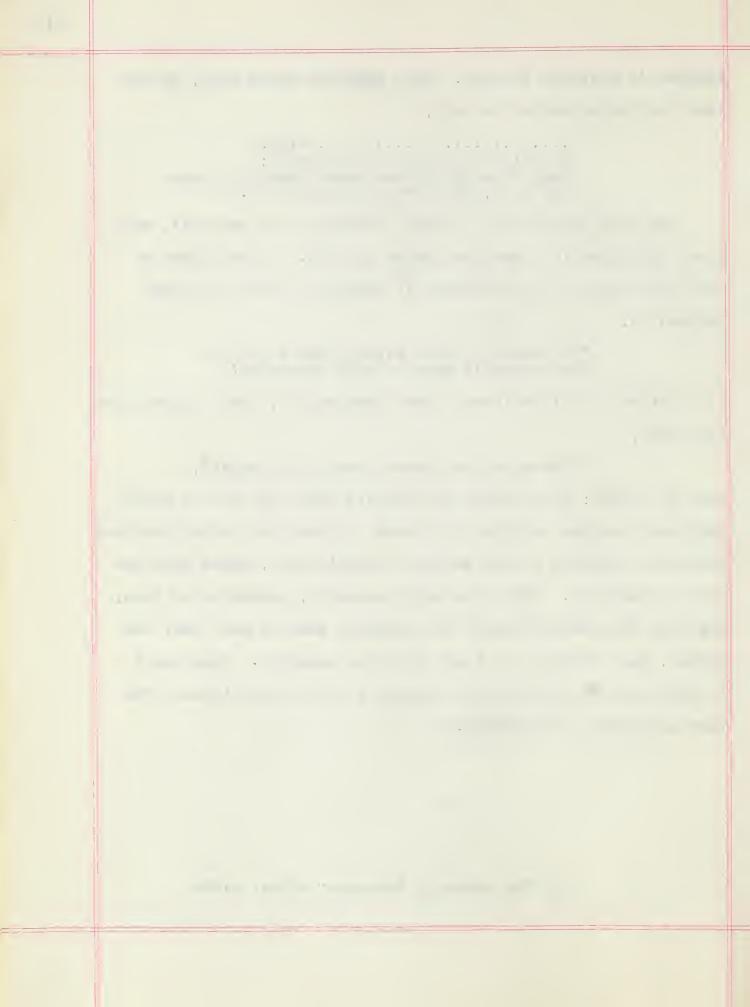
The last poem in this chapter, "England and America", was first published in a New York paper in 1874. In this poem we are fully aware of the fairness of Tennyson, when he advises England to,

"Be proud of those strong sons of thine Who wrench'd their rights from thee!"

In a letter to Walt Whitman, dated November 15, 1887, he explains the verse.

"Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught",
when he writes: "The coming year should give new life to every
American, who has breathed the breath of that soil which inspired
the great founders of the American constitution, whose work you
are to celebrate. Truly the mother-country, pondering on this,
may feel that howmuch soever the daughter owes to her, she, the
mother, has something to learn from the daughter. Especially
I would note the care taken to guard a noble constitution from
rash and unwise innovators."1

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.895



## Chapter III

The years 1832 to 1842 are often called "The Ten Years of Silence", a period when Tennyson was brooding over the death of Arthur Hallam. He tried to lose himself in laborious days, alone with his studies. He made occasional trips to London, where he met his friends, but that is as far as his visits went. He was satisfied to dwell alone. Until 1837 he dwelt at Somersby while he was preparing for his "In Memoriam".

Lincolnshire was the land of the poet's birth and early associations, and, yet, strangely enough, we find no specific mention of Lincoln, the city, or the cathedral among his poems. The towers of Lincoln can be seen for forty miles. Oliver Huckel who made a journey to the "Tennyson country" recorded:

"I have always felt that these lines in 'The Gardener's Daughter' were fairly suggestive of Lincoln".1

"Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad stream
That, stirred with languid pulses of the oar,
Waves all its lazy lillies, and creeps on,
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge
Crown'd with the minster-towers."

This poem was written at Cambridge. It was corrected in Spedding's chambers at 60 Lincoln's Inn Fields, and published in 1842. In "The Reception of the Early Poems", by Aubrey

(1) Through England With Tennyson: p.314

de Vere, he writes: "I remember an incident connected with 'The Gardener's Daughter'. The poet had corrected it as carefully as he had originally composed it in his own head, where he was in the habit of keeping more than one poem at a time before he wrote down any of them. I found him one day in James Spedding's rooms. He showed me the MS and said, 'The corrections jostle each other, and the poem seems out of gear. Spedding has just now remarked that this passage, forty lines, should be omitted. He is right.' It was omitted."

During the autumn of 1838, Tennyson went out to Torquay, a sea-village in England. Here he wrote "Audley Court". The poem was partially suggested by Abbey Park. The buoy near the village kept turning, seeming to appear and disappear. Torquay was located on a hill.

And sauntered home beneath a moon, that, just In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf Twilights of airy silver, till we reached The limit of the hills; and as we sank From rock to rock, upon the booming quay, The town was hush'd beneath us: lower down The bay was oily calm; the harbour-buoy, Sole star of phosphorescence in the calm, With one green sparkle ever and anon Dipt by itself, and we were glad of heart."

"Ulysses", the poem to considered now, is founded on a classical story, and yet portrays the optimism of Tennyson, as "The Two Voices" pictures the pessimism of the author. This poem was written shortly after the death of Hallam and convinced Tennyson of the need of ever going forward. It shows the bravery and courage of Tennyson, the man. In Ulysses, we see a character, (1) The Works of Tennyson: notesp. 897



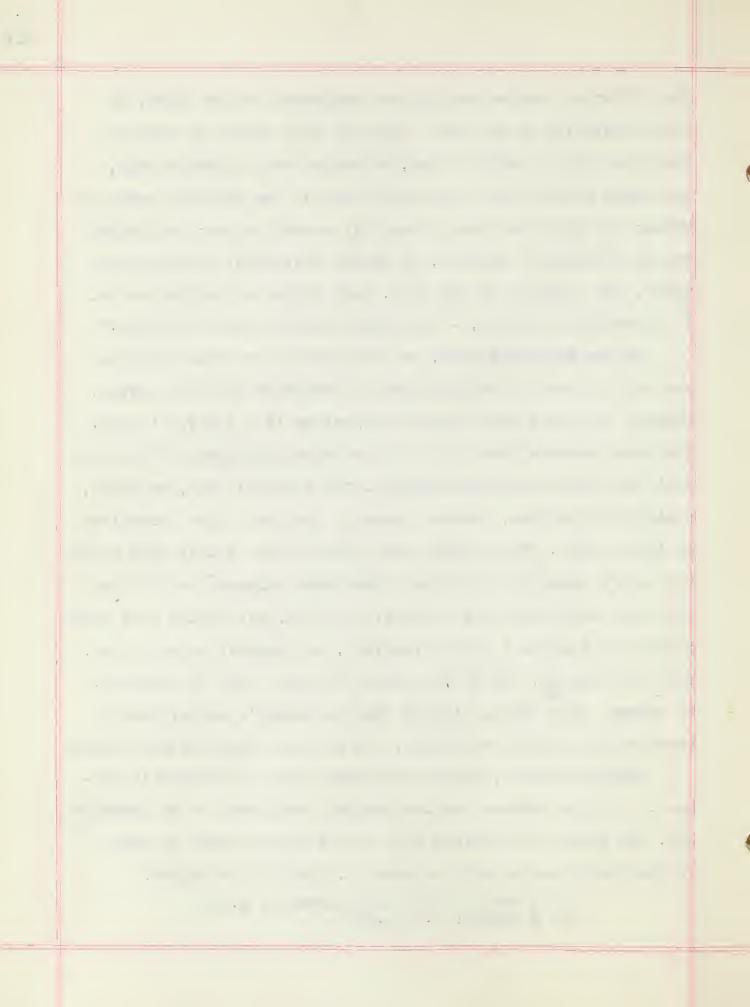
who, after all the wanderings and weariness of the years, is still unwilling to be idle. The poet then begins to realize that his life is worth living, no matter what is taken away, and comes to the conclusion that there is "no room for sense of wrong; for love that never found his earthly close; the sequel was no eternity of despair, no woeful retrospect melting into tears, but a repose of the will, that finds its comfort -- not in a rebellious memory, -- nor yet in entire forgetfullness."

In the following poem, we are going to see that Tennyson was not in favor of having himself identified with his poetry. However to keep a poem strictly objective is a difficult task. The Poet Laureate knew this, for he wrote and spoke of "Locksley Hall" and other monologues saying, "In a certain way, no doubt, poets and novelists, however dramatic they are, give themselves in their works. The mistake that people make is that they think the poet's poems are a kind of 'datalogue raisonné' of his very own self, and of all the facts of his life, not seeing that they often only express a poetic instinct, or judgment on character, real or imagined, and on the facts of lives, real or imagined. Of course, some poems, like my 'Ode to Memory', are evidently based on the poet's own nature, and on hints from his own life."2

"Locksley Hall", brings the reader back to Tennyson's boyhood. In this poem we see the youthful sentiment of an immature
boy. We witness the things that to a young man mean so much.
In Tennyson's son's diary of June 13, 1890, it is stated:

(2) A Memoir: v.2; p.379

<sup>(1)</sup> A Study of His Life and Works: p.85



"Speaking of the original 'Locksley Hall', he told us that two undergraduates were walking together sometime after he had left Cambridge. One of the two mentioned Tennyson. The other replied 'O do not mention that man's name. I hate him. I was the unhappy hero of "Locksley Hall". It is the story of my cousin's love and mine, known to all Cambridge when Mr. Tennyson was there, and he put in into verse.' Needless to say he had never heard either of the under-graduate or of his story. The poem was a simple invention as to place, incidents, and people."1

Tennyson always denied the fact that there was any touch of biography in this poem. In writing to Charles Esmarch in 1886, about "Locksley Hall", he said: "I thank you for the gift of your translation, but I must object and strongly to the statement in your Preface that I am the hero in either poem. 2 I never had a cousin Amy; Locksley Hall is an entirely imaginary edifice. My grandsons are little boys. I am not even white-I never had a gray hair in my head. The whole thing is a dramatic impersoation, but I find in almost all modern criticism this absurd tendency to personalties. Some of my thought may come out into the poem; but am I therfore the hero? is not one touch of biography in it from beginning to end."3

In this same poem, there is a reference to Mablethorpe, a small sea-shore town near Somersby. Here the Tennysons went many summers, where Alfred would spend his time in roaming about the

<sup>(1)</sup> A Memoir: v.2; p.379
(2) Locksley Hall -- Locksley Hall Sixty Years After
(3) A Memoir: v.2; p.331

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shore, a little verse-making now and then, and a great deal of his idle moments in day-dreaming. He was always to like the of Lincolnshire coast. As evidence this fondness he writes,

"Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time,"

which bears out the boyhood memories. Edward Fitzgerald notes about these opening verses: "This is all Lincolnshire coast about Mablethorpe where Alfred Tennyson stayed much, and where he said were the finest Seas except in Cornwall." Near the end of "Locksley Hall" there is a reference to the time when Tennyson was once journeying on a train from Liverpool to Manchester. The railroad had introduced a change in the mode of travel. Hence on this particular night, the darkness, plus the crowd around the station did not give Tennyson a chance to obtain a good look at the train. It was then that he is supposed to have composed this line:

"Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change,"
which implies that the wheels of the train ran in grouves.

a picture of its staircase and diming-room, which hangs

The next poem referred to is a bit more personal. When Tennyson ate in town, he was in the habit of frequenting the "Cock Tavern" in company with his friends. The old tavern, made famous by "Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue", is no longer there, and the student of literature must be content with

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.900

new tavern under the old name. An attempt has been made to preserve the old atmosphere. It was here "that he pledged the Muse in a pint of port,

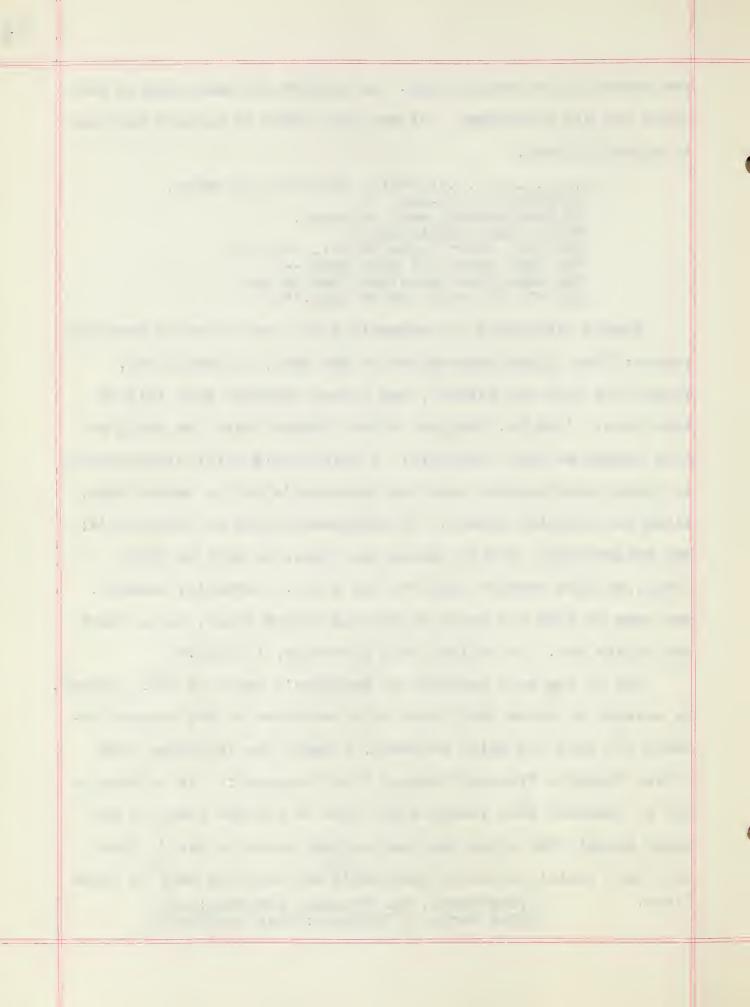
Imboding critic-pen
Or that eternal want of peace,
Which vexes public men
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them -Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.'"

Edward Fitzgerald is responsible for the following humorous report: "The 'plump Head-waiter of The Cock, by Temple Bar, famous for chop and porter', was rather offended when told of this poem. 'Had Mr. Tennyson dined oftener there, he would not have minded so much,' he said. I think A.T.s chief dinner-resort in these ante-laureate days was Bertolini's at the Newton Head, close to Leicester Square. We sometimes called it Dertolini's; but not seriously; for the place was clean, as well as very cheap, and the cookery good for the price. Bertolini himself, who came to take the money at the end of the feast, was a grave and polite man. He retired with a fortune, I think."2

One of the most personal of Tennyson's poems is "The Letters".

To attempt to prove that there is a reference to the romance between the poet and Emily Sellwood, I quote the following from Oliver Huckel's "Through England With Tennyson": "It is beautiful to remember that Tennyson was true to his own ideal of the happy knight 'who loved only one and who clave to her.' Some have seen reminiscences of Tennyson's own courting days in these lines: (1) His Homes, His Friends, His Work:p.54

(2) The Works of Tennyson: notes; pp. 902-903



'We parted: sweetly gleamed the stars,
And sweet the vapour-braided blue,
Low breezes fanned the belfry bars,
As home-ward by the church I drew
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow's swells.
"Dark porch," I said, "silent aisle,
There a sound of marriage bells".'"1

One other poem in this group was about Edward Lear, a noted landscape painter. To him Tennyson dedicated the poem, "To E.L., On His Travels in Greece", written while the poet was in Edinburgh, describes how the poet himself would have felt.

All the longing for joys now past is brought out in another personal poem, "Break, break, break". Even the title, the sound of waves, makes the reader know how Tennyson felt when he cries,

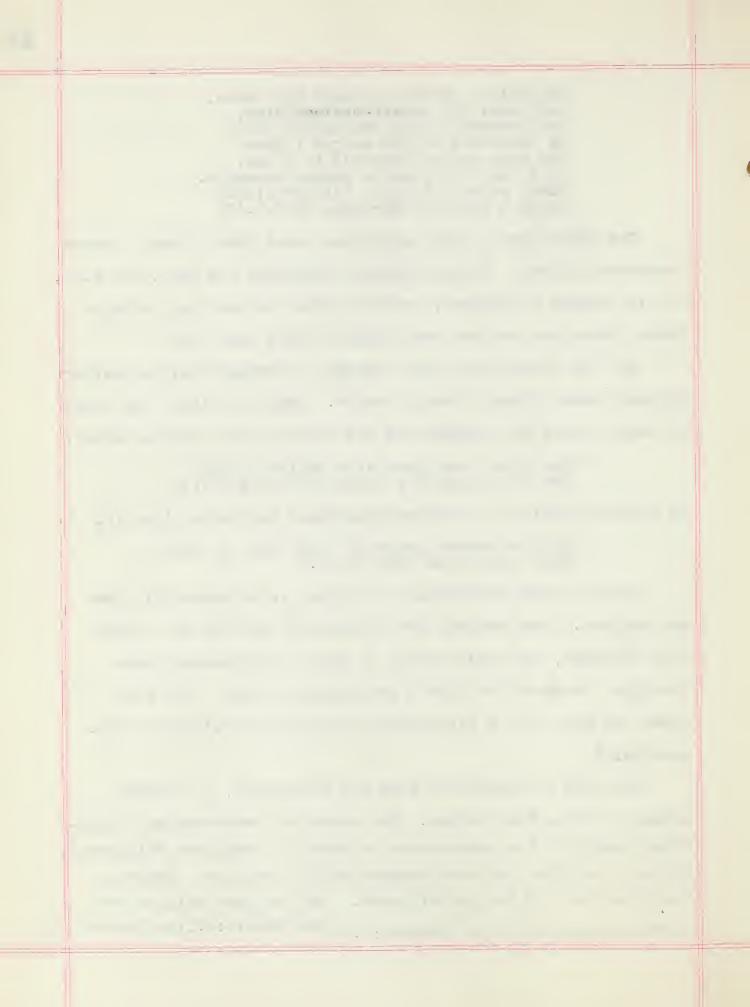
"But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand, And the sound of a voice that is still!"

No greater feeling has Tennyson expressed for Hallam than in,

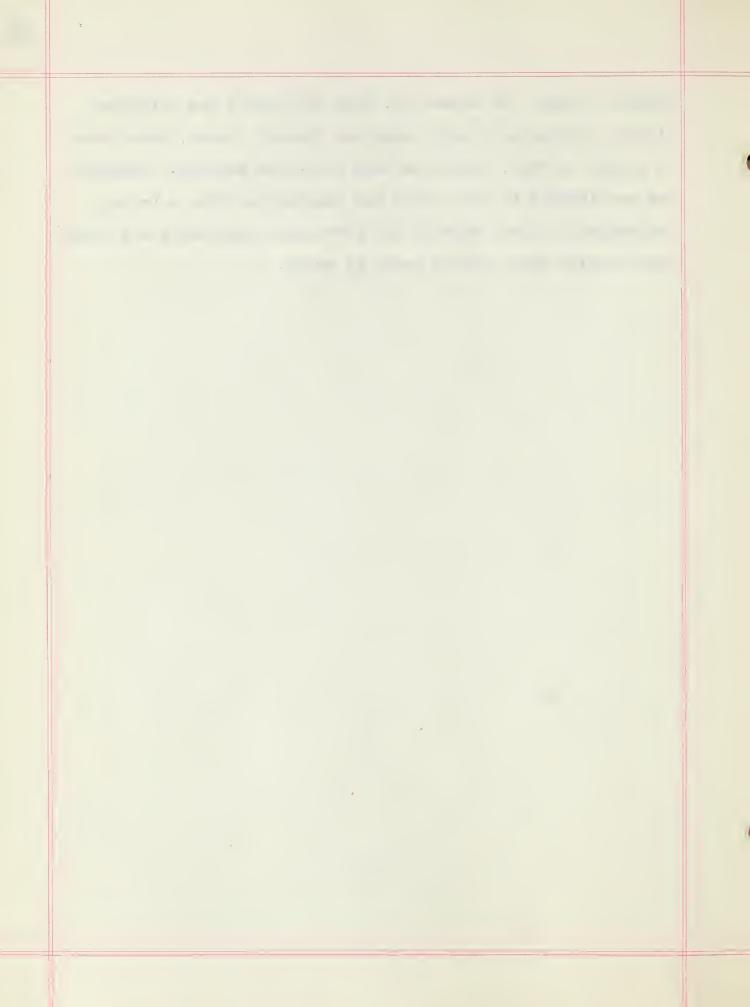
"But the tender grace of a day that is dead Will never come back to me."

There is some difference of opinion as to where this poem was written. Some authors are inclined to believe the theory that Clevedon, the burial place of Hallam, influenced these thoughts. We have the poet's own denial on this. "It was made", he asid, "in a Lincolnshire land at five o'clock in the morning! 2

The rise of Tennyson's fame was attributed, in a great measure to this 1842 volume. The melodious sweetness and rhythmical beauty of his portraiture of women in "Adeline", "Eleanore" Lilian", and the like were unquestionably immature. However, they were full of the joy of youth. The poet had ability for (1)Through England with Tennyson:p.80<sup>(2)</sup>A Memoir:v.1;pp.904-905



greater things. He showed it, when his poetry now evidenced clearer reasoning, a more sustained thought, which, when there is a goal in view, excites a more life-like emotion. Tennyson had now learned to join fancy and imagination into a better philosophy of life, one that had a restored confidence and faith, and in which there was no sense of wrong.

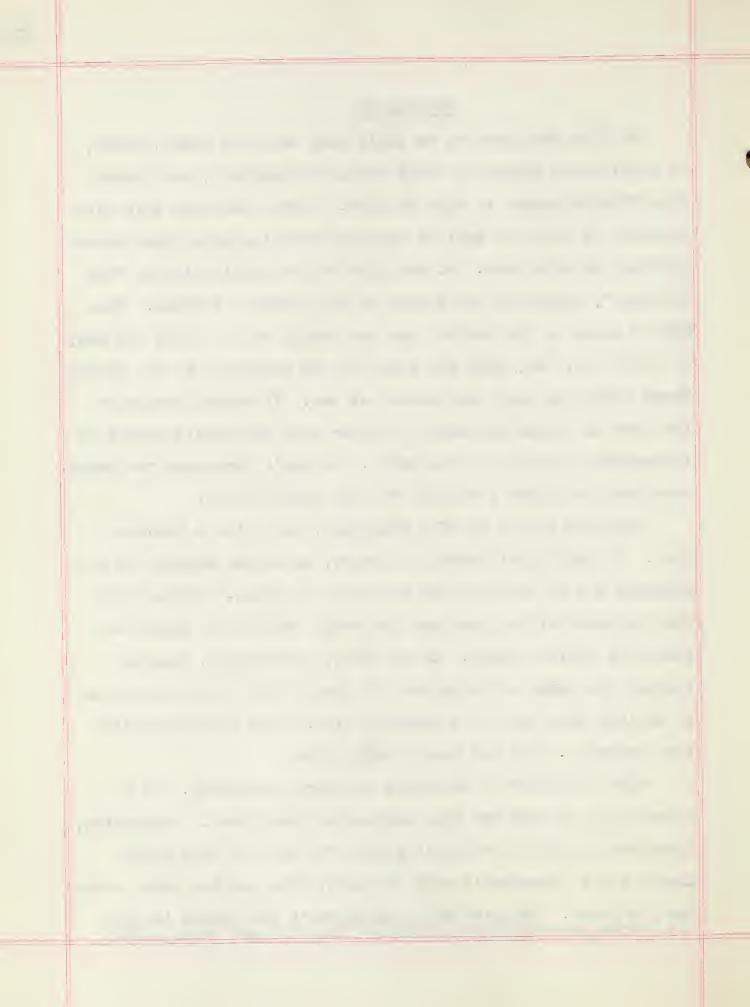


## Chapter IV

In this next period, we shall deal with the poems, which, in MacMillan's edition of "The Works Of Tennyson", are listed from "The Princess" to "The Window". Before starting this discussion, it would be well to mention something about the "woman problem" of this time. At the time of the publication of "The Princess", attention was turned to the thought of women. What was her place in the world? Was she simply to be a wife for man, or could she, too, take her place in the struggles of the world? Women wished to gain the respect of men. It became necessary for them to become educated, in order that they could occupy an independent position in the world. To man's reverence for woman-hood would be added a respect for her capabilities.

Tennyson offers us "The Princess", much like a humorous play. In the slight traces of satire, we wonder whether or not Tennyson was in favor of the education of woman. The most effective parts of the poem are the songs, which are placed between the various books. In one song, for example, Tennyson praises the unity and happiness of family life, thus leading us to believe that this is a personal view. This coincides with the accounts of his own happy family life.

"The Princess" is dedicated to Henry Lushington. It is interesting to know why this dedication took place. Lushington, sympathetic with his friend's poetry, "is said to have known almost all of Tennyson's work by heart." The two had been friends for six years. The poet held Lushington's criticisms in high (1) Alfred Lord Tennyson; A Study of His Life and Work; p.106



regard, dedicating this poem to the critic after a visit, during which "The Princess" was discussed.

"The scene of the introduction is the garden at Swainston, the seat of the late Sir John Simeon, in the Isle of Wight, and the host, Sir Walter Vivian, is Sir John Simeon himself."1

A personal reference to Tennyson's grammar school days is seen in the lines:

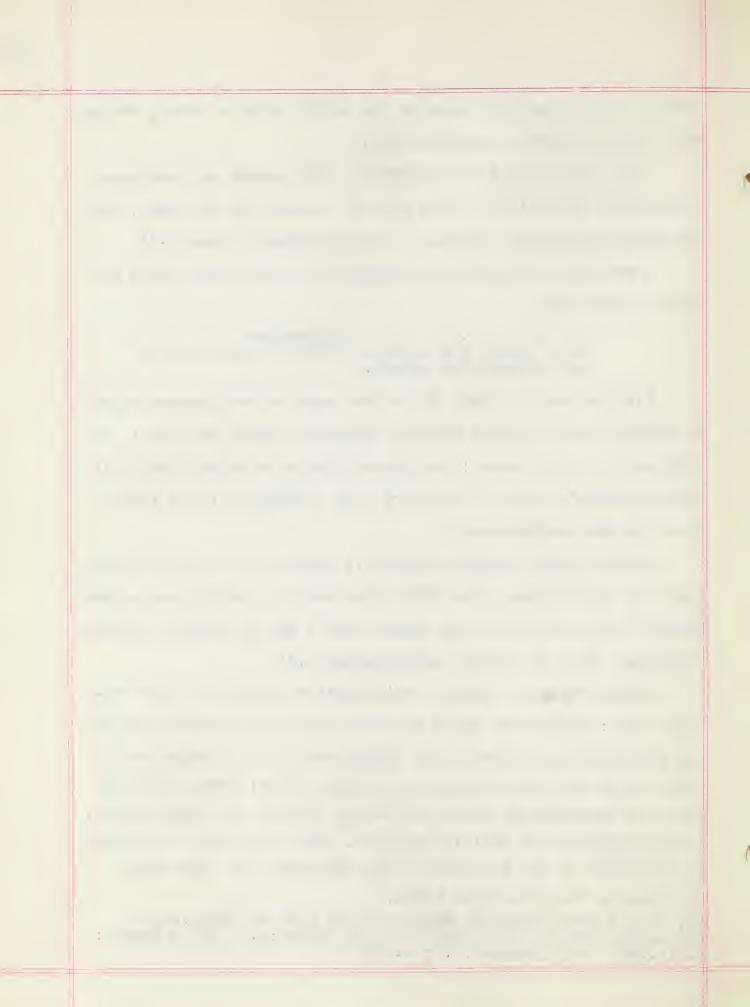
".....otherwhere
Pure sport; a herd of boys with clamour bowl'd
And stumped the wicket."

"At the age of eight, Alfred was sent to the grammar school at Louth, some ten miles north of Somersby across the wold. He took part in their games; the description of a cricket match in 'The Princess' is one of the very rare instances of his indulgence in the inaccurate."2

Another game Tennyson enjoyed is referred to in the following: "In the Prologue, the 'Tale from mouth to mouth' was a game
which I have more than once played when I was at Trinity College,
Cambridge, with my brother undergraduates."3

Hallam Tennyson explains still another passage in the Prologue thus: "Tunbridge Wells was not liked by my grandmother so she and the family migrated to Boxley not far from Maidstone in order to be near the Lushingtons at Park House: Edmund Lushington, the accomplished Greek and German scholar and Egyptologist, having married Miss Cecilia Tennyson. The park round the house is described in the prologue to the 'Princess'."4 This description is found in these lines:

(1) Alfred Lord Tennyson; AStudy of His Life and Work:p.106 (2) Aspects of His Life Character and Poetry:p.44 (3) A Memoir: v.1;p.253 (4) A Memoir:v.1; p.182



"The park, the crowd, the house; but all within The sward was trim as any garden lawn: And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends From neighbout seats,"

"The plan of 'The Princess' may have suggested itself when the project of a Women's College was in my father's mind (1839), or it may have arisen in its mock heroic form from a Cambridge joke, such as he commenorated in the lines 'The Doctor's Daughter'."1

There also is a reference to Tennyson's visit to Ireland in "The Princess", taken in 1848. He has left no account of his trip, but Aubrey de Vere, who invited the poet, kept a record of the tour. Tennyson met Maurice Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry, who lived at Valencia, having a desire to see for himself the "cliffs and the Waves". From there he went to Killarney, remaining only a few days. That visit gave Tennyson one of the finest songs in "The Princess". "The echoes of the bugle at Killarney on that loveliest of lakes inspired the song introduced into the second edition of 'The Princess' beginning,

'The splendour falls on castle walls And snowy summits old in story;'"

and closing with spirited ending,

"Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying, And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying."2

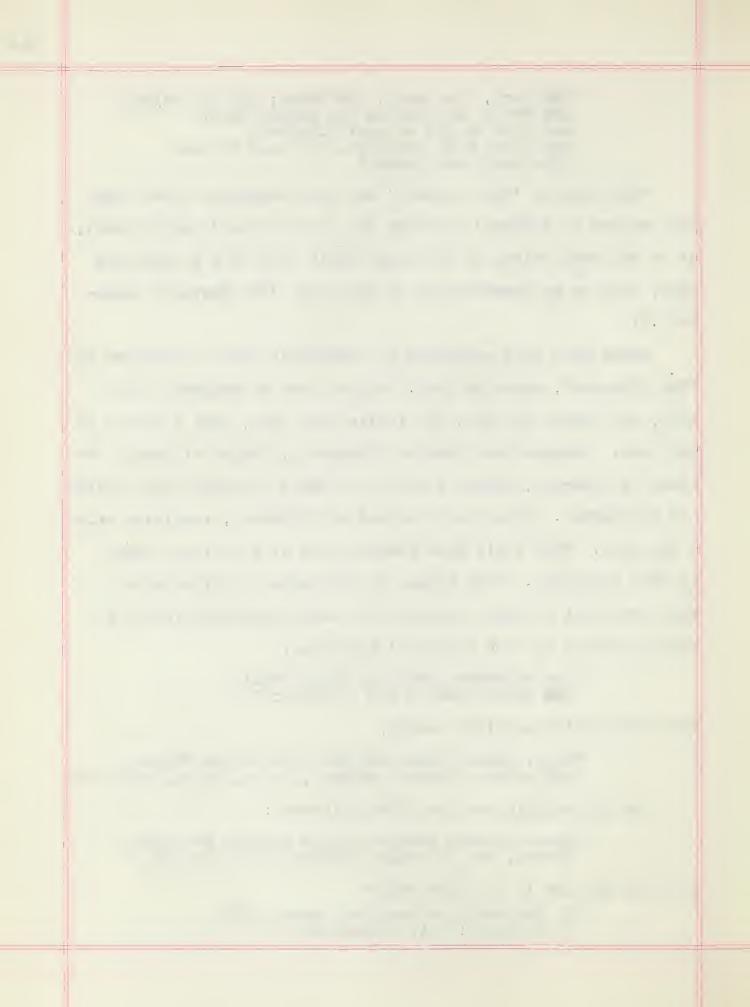
The following lines from "The Princess":

"When the wild peasant rights himself the rick Flames, and his anger reddens in the heavens,"

and this passage in "To Mary Boyle",

(1) The Works of Tennyson; notes; p.912

(2) A Memoir: v.l; pp.291-292



"And once -- I once remember that the red night When thirty ricks,
All flaming made an English homestead Hell -These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line,"

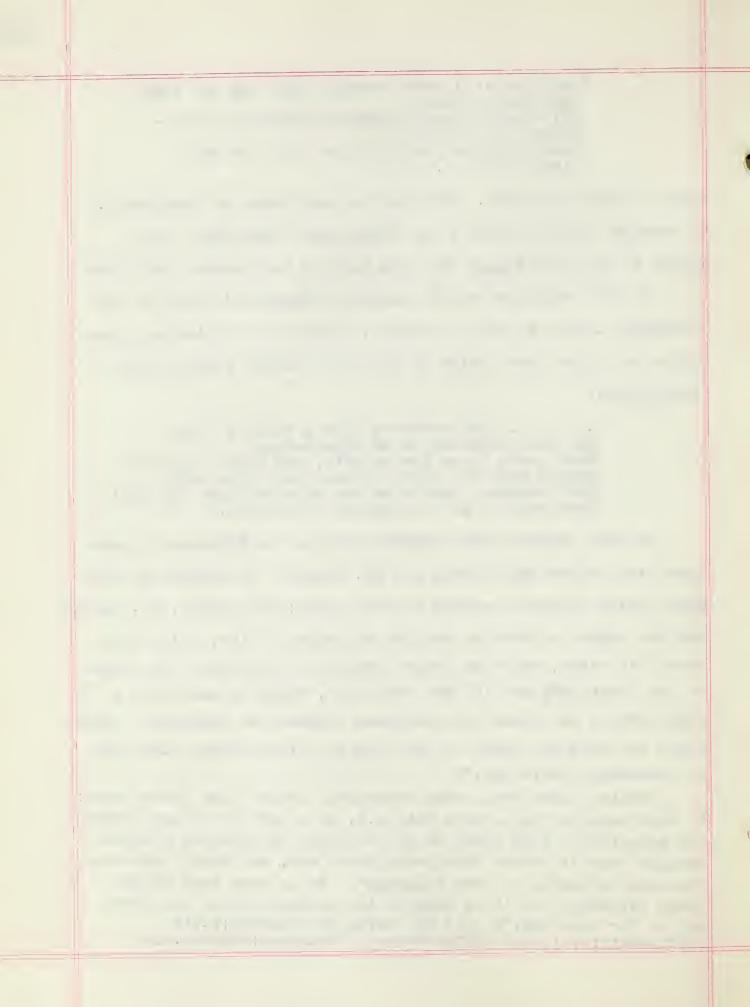
refer to the same event. This was an experience of Tennyson's.
"I remember seeing thirty ricks burning near Cambridge, and I helped to pass the bucket from the well to help quench the fire!!

In "The Princess" we see traces of Tennyson's trip to the "Pyrenees", when he was in college, because the following lines refer to a pine tree, which at that time deeply impressed his imagination:

"........And standing like a stately Pine
Set in a cataract on an island-crag
When storm is on the heights, and right and left
Suck'd from the heart of the long hills roll
The torrents, dash'd to the vale: and yet her will
Bred will in me to overcome it or fall."

In 1861 Tennyson made another trip to the Pyrenees in company with Arthur High Clough and Mr. Dakyns. In regards to this Lord Hallam Tennyson records the following: "My father, Mr. Clough, and Mr. Dakyns climbed to the Lac de Gaube, a blue, still lake among fir woods, where my father quoted to Mr. Clough the simile of the 'stately pine' in 'The Princess', which he made from a pine here on an island in mid-stream between two cataracts. More pines he found had grown by the side of this solitary pine that he remembered years ago."2

Writing about this scene described, Arthur High Clough said:
"I have been out for a walk with A.T. to a sort of island between
two waterfalls, with pines on it, of which he retained a recollection from his visit thirty-one years ago, and which, moreover,
furnished a simile to 'The Princess'. He is very fond of the
place evidently, as it is more in the mountains than any other,
and so far superior. "3 (1) The Works of Tennyson: p.916
(2) A Memoir: v.l; p.475 (3) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.916



The Princess had been striving to be

"The single pure and perfect animal."

In this section following, "Tennyson weaves into the passage a portrait of his mother, as representing the type of character toward which the impulsively radical princess had been striving.

'Yet there was one thro' whom I loved her, one Not learned, save in gracious household ways, Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants, Not angel, but a dearer being, all dipt In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise, Interpreter between the Gods and men, Who looked all native to her place, and yet On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved, And girdled her with music. Happy he With such a mother!'"l

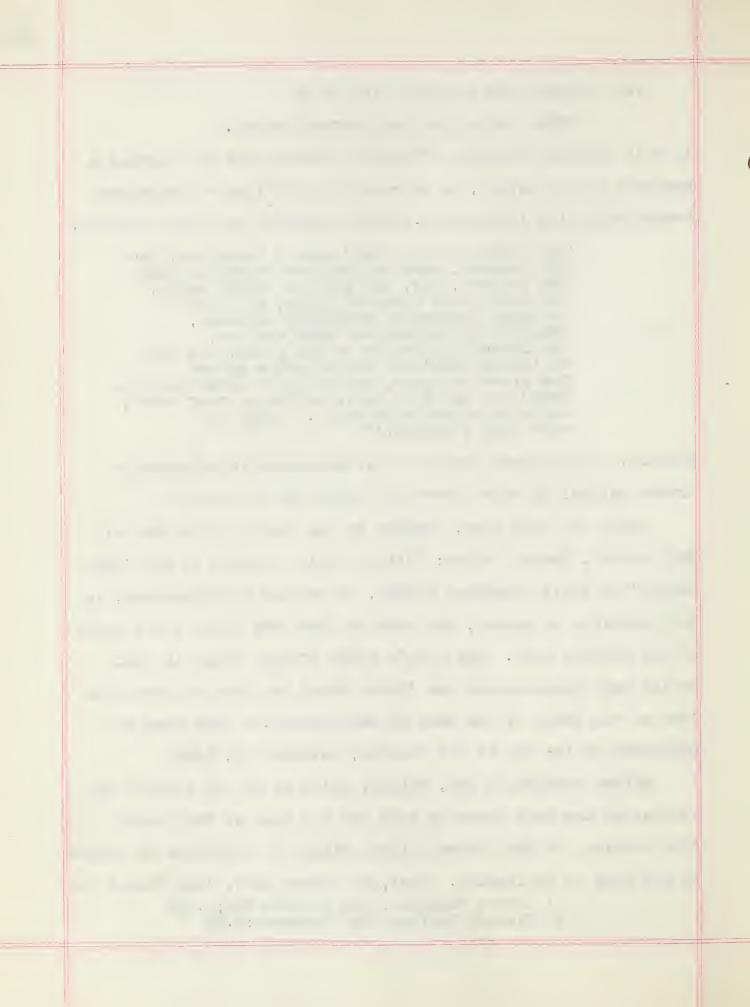
Finally, in this poem there is this unmistakable allusion to Arthur Hallam: "My other heart and almost my half-self."

About the next poem, the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington", Huckel states: "After a brief sojourn in the 'Lake Region' on their honeymoon (1850), he settled at Twickenham, in the outskirts of London, and here he spent the first three years of his married life. The poet's study (Chapel House in Montpelier Row) was known as the 'Green Room' and here he wrote his 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington'." The poem was published on the day of the funeral, November 18, 1852.

Alfred Tennyson's son, Hallam, tells us of the respect and admiration the Poet Laureate held for the Duke of Wellington.

"One evening, at Bath House, Milnes wished to introduce my father to the Duke of Wellington. 'No', my father said, 'why should the

(1) Alfred Tennyson: How to Know Him; p.283 (2) Through England With Tennyson: p.65



great Duke be bothered by a poor poet like me?' He only once saw the Duke, when he was riding out of the Horse Guards at Whitehall: and took off his hat. The Duke instantly made his military salute, commemorated in the 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington' in the well-known lines:

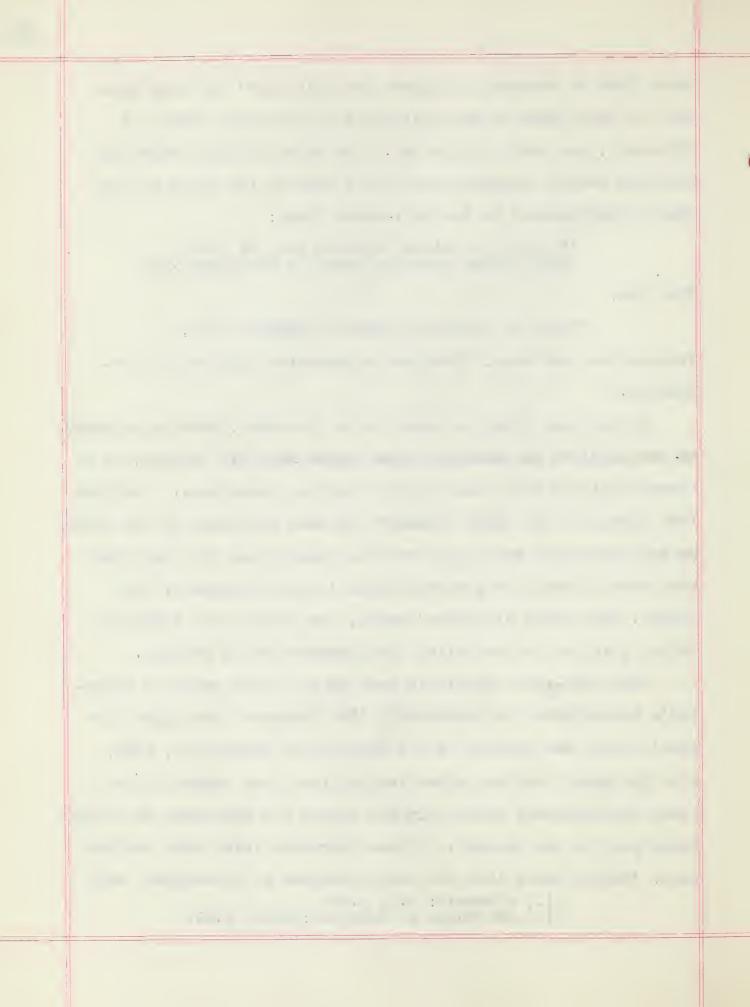
'No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.'"1
The line,

"Here in streaming London's central roar,"
records the time when, "Tennyson accompanied Fitgerald to St.
Paul's".2

In the poem which is about to be discussed, there is reference to the soldiers at Balaclava whom Tempson called his friends, and he himself said he was proud to call them his countrymen. Now that "The Charge Of the Light Brigade" has been portrayed by the films, we can appreciate more than ever the inspiration this poem must have been to the hard pressed forces in the trenches of the Crimea. The sound of horses' hoofs, the clatter and sweeping melody give lie to the belief that Tennyson was a dreamer.

"The best-known patriotic poem of the first years of Tenny-son's Laureateship is undoubtedly 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', which was printed in the Examiner of December 9, 1854, with the mote, 'Written after reading the first report of the Times correspondent where only 607 sabers are mentioned as having taken part in the charge'. It was reprinted later with another note: 'Having heard that the brave soldiers at Sebastopol, whom

<sup>(1)</sup> A Memoir: v.1; p.268
(2) The Works of Tennyson:notes; p.919



I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad,
"The Charge of the Light Brigade", I have ordered a thousand
copies of it to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add
to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea: but if what I
heard be true, they will not be displeased to receive these
copies of the ballad from me, and to know that those who sit at
home love and honour them.'"1

As can be readily seen, such an accusation that someone had blundered caused a furore in political circles. Tennyson was influenced by friends among the critics who advised him to omit the phrase,

"Someone had blunder'd".

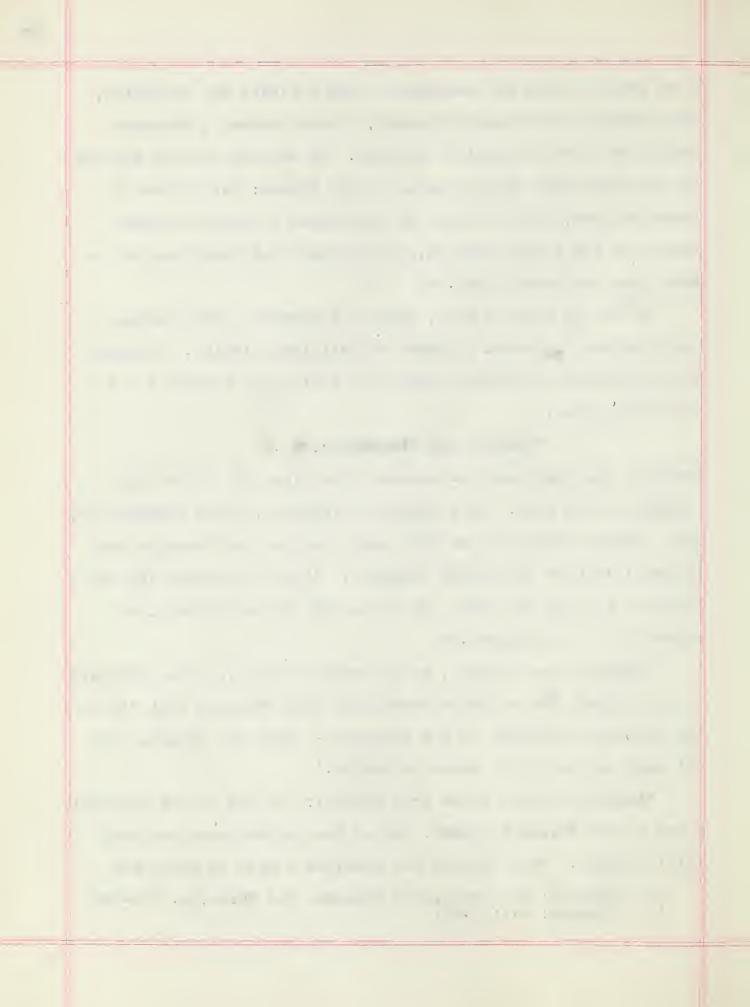
However, the poet soon re-inserted this line, for it was the keyhote of the poem. In a letter to Tennyson, dated November 12, 1855, Ruskin states: "I am very sorry you put the 'Someone had blunder'd'out of 'The Light Brigade'. It was precisely the most tragical line in the poem. It is as true to its history, as essential to its tragedy."2

"Tennyson sent copies, as his personal gift, to the soldiers in the Crimea, having heard through an army chaplain that 'it is the greatest favourite of the soldiers -- half are singing, and all want to have it in black and white.'

"Another officer wrote from Scutari: 'We had in the hospital a man of the "Light Brigade", one of the few who survived that fatal mistake. This patient had received a kick in the chest

(1) Tennyson; His Homes, His Friends, His Works; pp. 125-126

(2) A Memoir: v.l; p.411



from a horse long after the battla of Balaclava, while in barracks at Scutari. He was depressed in spirits, which prevented him from throwing off the disease engendered by the blow. The doctor remarked that he wished the soldier could be roused. I tried to enter into a conversation with him, spoke of the charge, but could elicit only monosyllabic replies. A copy of Tennyson's poems having been lent me that morning, I took it out and read it. The man, with kindling eye, at once entered upon a spirited description of the fatal gallop between the guns' mouths to and from that cannon-crowded height. He asked to hear it again, but, as by this time a number of convalescents were gathered around, I slipped out of the yard. In a few days the invalid requested the doctor to discharge him for duty'."1

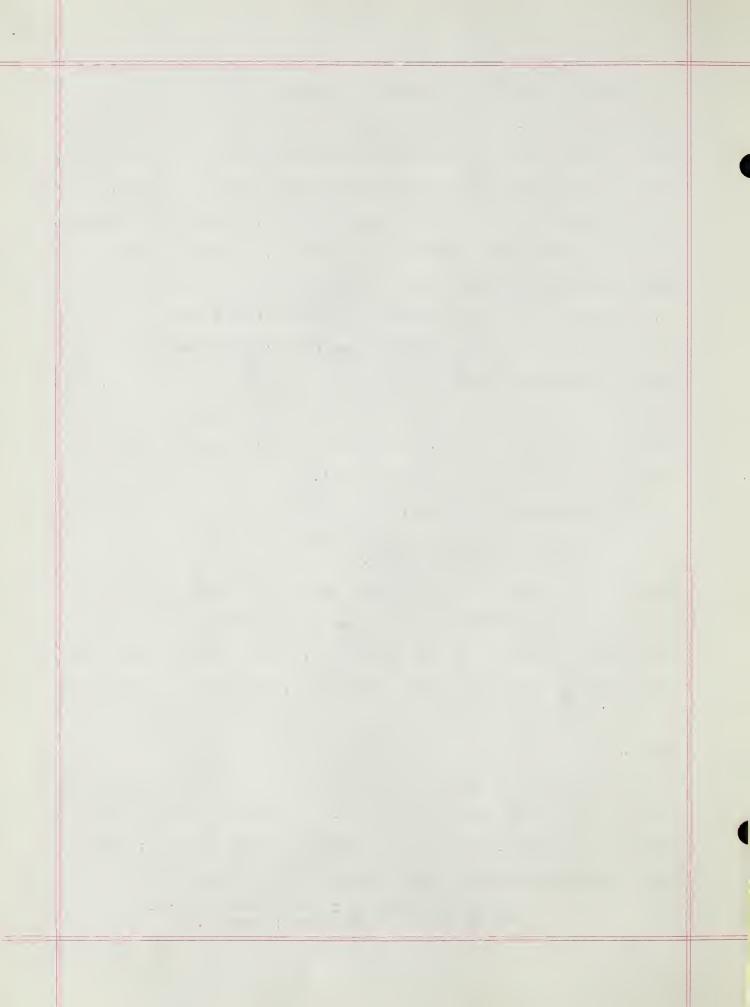
The opening of the poem,

"Half a league, half a league Half a league onward,"

was the order delivered by Captain Nolan. "He rode in his saddle upright some minutes after he was shot, his sword-hand uplifted and he was the first man killed. Lord Cardigan and 'The Light Brigade' covered a mile and a half, with Russian batteries on either hand and in front of them, before they encountered the enemy."2

The "Welcome to Alexandra" was written by the Poet Laureate out of a desire to please the Queen. Lady Agusta Bruce, in a letter to Tennyson, records the feelings of Her Majesty: "The Queen's response to your words was all that I had expected.

(1) Alfred Tennyson: How To Know Him; p.36 (2) Teh Works of Tennyson: notes; p.921



Her Majesty desiresme to thank you very warmly, and to tell you how much she rejoices that the sweet and charming Princess should be thus greeted."1

Tennyson himself did not see the marriage of the Prince of Wales to Princess Alexandra of Denmark, his ticket for the wedding arriving too late, having been mis-sent. In this selection, he was faced with the difficult task of presenting something fitting for this public occasion. The poet cleverly blends the racial differences in,

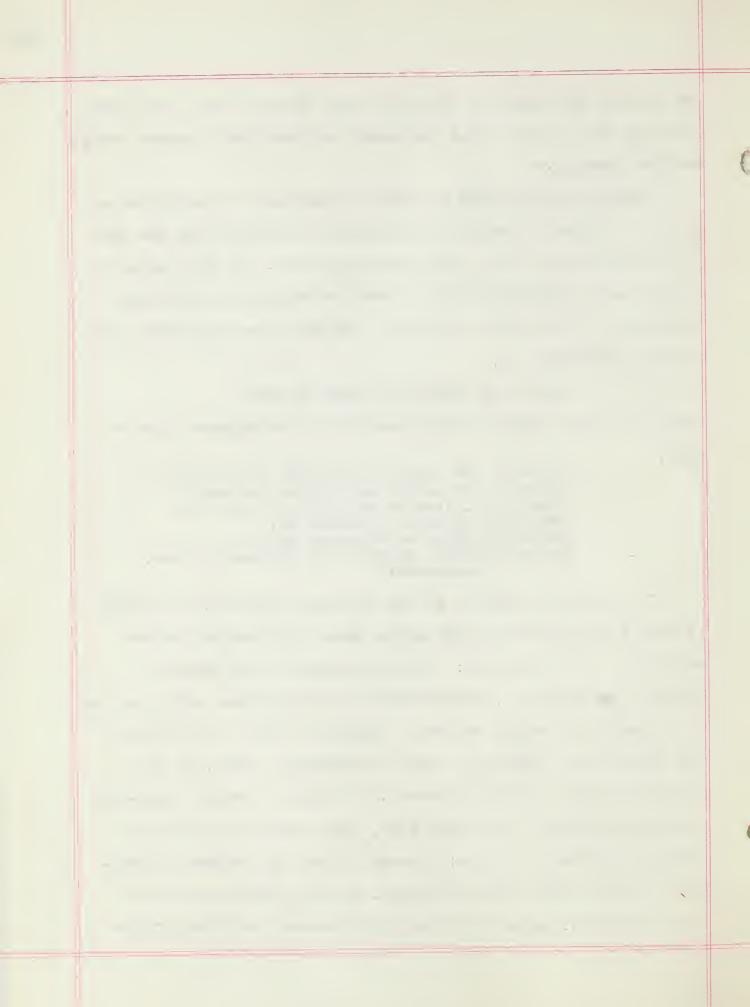
"Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,"

There is little doubt of the sincerity of the welcome, for he adds.

"Bride of the heir of the Kings of the sea -O joy to the people and joy to the one,
Come to us, love us and make us your own:
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!"

In opening my remarks on the "Northern Farmer", I am going to give two conflicting statements about the farm and farmer mentioned. Nicolson says: "Directly opposite the church is reared a red building, castellated and incongruous, with its rows of white-ashed Italian windows. Baumber's farm, it is called, and Baumber was identified, much to Tennyson's fury, as the original of the 'Northern Farmer'." I "'At all events, what-ever may have happened,' my father said, 'The Moated Grange is an imaginary house in the fen; I never so much as dreamed of Baumber's farm as the abode of Mariana, and the character was so

(1) Tennyson: Aspects of His Life Character and Poetry; p.36

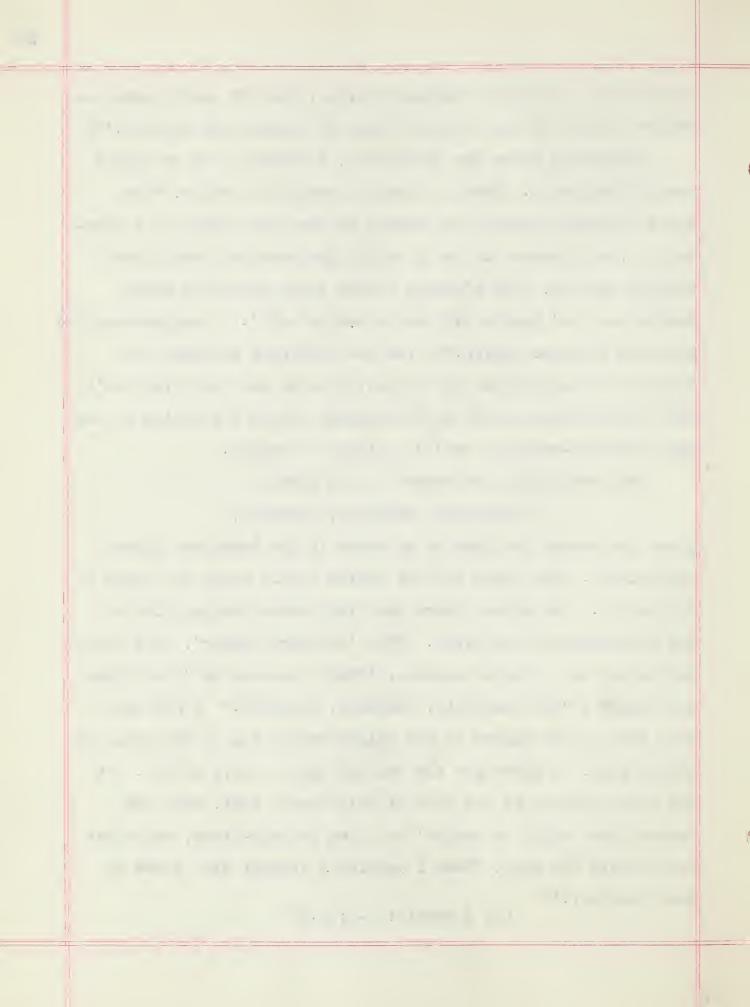


ludicrously unlike the Northern Farmer, that it really makes me wonder how any one can have the face to invent such stories. ""1

Concerning these two quotations, I believe that we should accept Tennyson's. Here is what his son has to offer: "The first (Northern Farmer) is founded on the dying words of a farmbailiff, as reported to me by my old great-uncle, when he was verging upon 80: 'God A'mighty little knows what He's about taking me. An' Squire will be so mad an' all'. I conjectured the man from that one saying."2 The Poet Laureate evidences his interest in the affairs of the day, when we see the dying man's only consolation in that he will escape seeing the coming of the new threshing-machine, "wi' 'is kittle o' steam".

The onomatopoeia expressed in the phrase,

"Proputty, proputty, proputty,"
gives the reader the idea to be noted in the "Northern Farmer"
(new style). The swing and the rhythm fairly sweep one along in its canter. One almost hears the rich farmer keeping time to the hoof-beats of the horse. "The 'Northern Farmer', (new style) is founded on a single sentence, 'When I canters my 'erse along the ramper I 'ears proputty, proputty, proputty.' I had been told that a rich farmer in our neighbourhood was in the habit of saying this. I never saw the man and know no more of him. It was also reported of the wife of this worthy that, when she entered the 'salle a manger' of a sea bathing-place, she slapt her pockets and said, 'When I married I brought him 5000' on each shoulder.'"1



The year 1851 found Tennyson in Italy. It is this journey taken shortly after the death of the baby, which the poet records in "The Daisy". People who are acquainted with the places mentioned, may find many and varied sketches of southern life, full of description and spirited movement. Among the towns mentioned are Monaco, Cogoletto, Florence, Reggio, Parma, and Como. Evidence of an almost overwhelming sorrow is commemorated in the following lines, where there is a reference to the loss of his child:

"So dear a life your arms enfold Whose crying is a cry for gold."

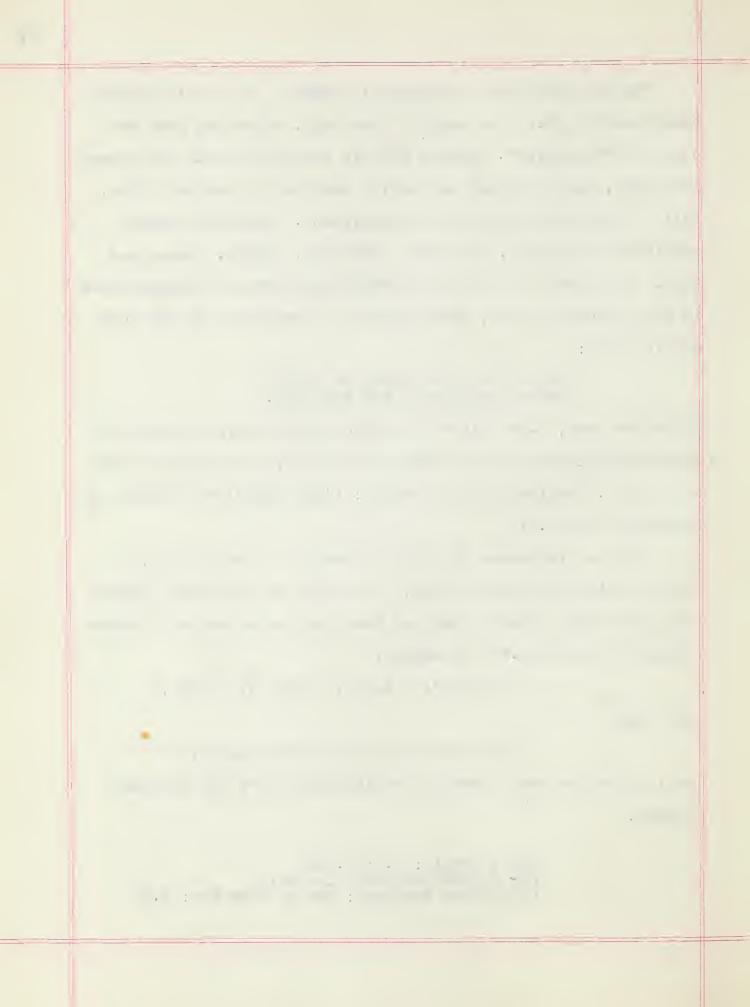
While the poem, "The Daisy", describes many scenes in southern Europe experienced by the Tennysons in 1851, it was not written until 1853. Hallam Tennyson states: "The Daisy' was written in Edinburgh (1853)."1

"We are fortunate in having a poetical record of it,2 made sometime afterward, when, on a visit to Edinburgh, Tennyson discovered a daisy that had been kept in a book as a remembrance of the trip."3 In memory,

"I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it to you," and then

"My fancy fled to the South again,"
tell us of the poet's mood in reminiscing about the trip mentioned.

<sup>(1)</sup> A Memoir: v.1; p.363(2) Journey to Italy in 1851(3) Alfred Tennyson: How to Know Him: p.27



In the poem, "To The Rev. F. D. Maurice", written in 1854, the Poet Laureate invites the churchman,

"Godfather, come and see your boy",

to visit his god-child. Tennyson had purchased "Farringford"

on the Isle of Wight, in 1853. He had definitely decided to

leave London for the peacefulness of a sea-side home. Here

Maurice could be free of any cries of "Anathema" to his theo
logical teachings. "Mr. Maurice had been ejected from his

professorship at King's college for non-orthoxody, He had es
pecially alarmed some of the 'weaker' brethren' by pointing out

that the word 'eternal' in 'eternal punishment', strictly trans
lated, referred to the quality, not the duration of the punish
ment."1 The following offers a good description of Tennyson's new

home, as well as an invitation which sounds appealing:

"Where, far from the noise and smoke of town, I watch the twilight falling brown All round a careless-order'd garden Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine, But honest talk and wholesome wine, And only fear the magpie gossip Garrulous under a roof of pine;

For groves of pine on either hand To break the blast of winter, stand; And further on, the hoary channel Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand;

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.922

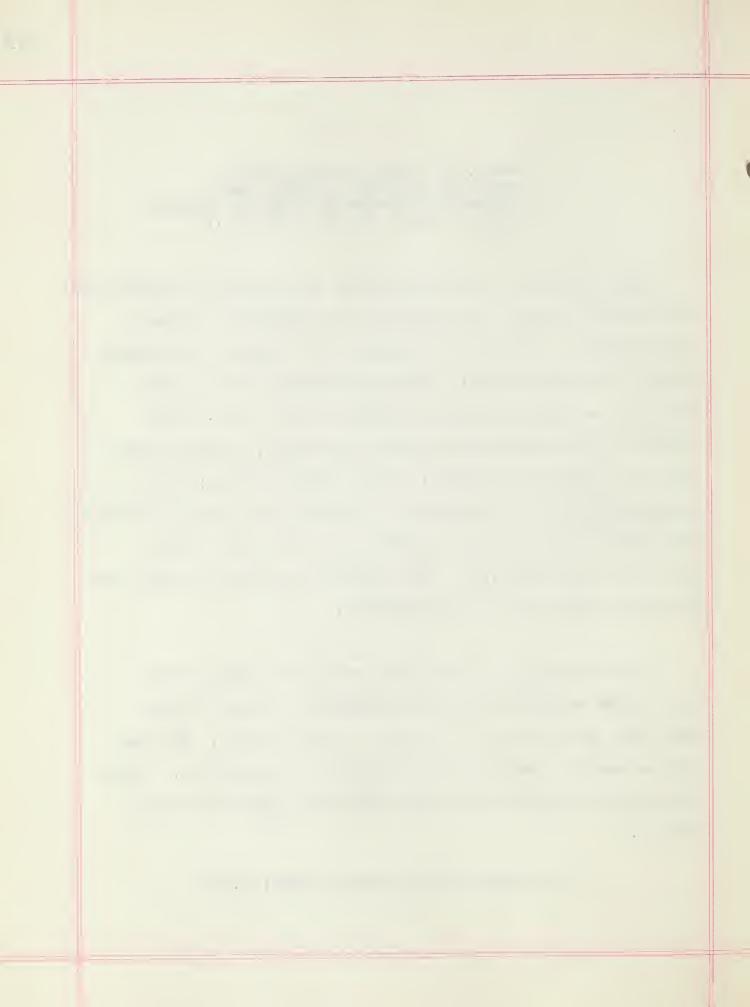


Where, if below the milky steep Some ship of battle slowly creep, And on thro' zones of light and shadow Glimmer away to the lonely deep."

Continuing on to the next poem in this group we realize that to understand fully "In the Valley of Cauteretz", we must again refer to a trip to the Pyrenees, in company with Arthur Hallam, in the year 1830. These two friends became interested in the revolt going on in Spain at that time. They actually made an expedition aiding the rebels, carrying with them some money and supplies. Arthur Hallam states: "I played my part as a conspirator in a small way, and made friends with two or three gallant men who have since been trying their luck with Valdes." This experience served to bring the two young adventurers closer together.

"In the Valley of Cauteretz" was written years after that first eventful trip to the Pyrenees. In July of the year 1861, Tennyson met his friend, Arthur Clough, who had gone to seek his health in the "Valley". It was here, thirty years after, that the poet wrote about the pleasure of days gone by.

(1) A Study of His Life and Work: p.44



"On August 6th, 1861, my father's birthday, we arrived at Cauteretz, -- his favourite valley in the Pyrenees. Before our windows we had the torrent rushing over its rocky bed from far away among the mountains and falling in cataracts. Patches of snow lay on the peaks above, and nearer were great wooded heights, glorious with autumnal colours, bare rocks here and there, and greenest mountain meadows below."1

"My father was vexed that he had written, 'two and thirty years ago', in his poem, instead of 'one and thirty years ago', and as late as 1892 wished to alter it since he hated inaccuracy. I persuaded him to let his first reading stand, for the public had learned to love the poem in its present form: and beside 'two and thirty' was more melodious."2

The thoughts of Arthur Hallam are continually with Tennyson in this poem:

"Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead, And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree, The voice of the dead was a living voice to me".

Sir John Simeon, an old friend of Tennyson's died in Switzerland. On May 23, 1870, the Tennyson's received news of Sir John Simeon's death. The Poet Laureate went to Swainston for the funeral. In Mrs. Tennyson's journal of May 1, 1870, she writes: "'In the Garden at Swainston' was written while smoking one of Sir John's pipes in the Swainston garden. All dreadfully sad and trying and seeming all the sadder, for the sun shone and the roses bloomed profusely. Alfred very sad, his loss haunted

(1) A Memoir: v.l; p474 (2) A Memoir: v.l; p.475 him. Sir John was a brother to us."1

The lines,

"Shadows of three dead men Walk'd in the walks with me,"

refer to Sir John Simeon, Henry Lushington, and Arthur Hallam.

The intensity of Tennyson's feelings is shown in the following:

"Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee:
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that will ever be:
Three dead men have I loved and thou
Art last of the three."

Hallam Lord Tennyson records a letter sent him by Mrs.

Richard Ward, daughter of Sir John Simeon, concerning "The

Flower". "However absorbed Tennyson might be in earnest talk,

his eye and ear were always alive to the natural objects around

him. I have often know him stop short in a sentence to listen

to a blackbird's song, to watch the sunlight glint on a butter
fly's wing, or to examine a field-flower at his feet. The lines

of 'The Flower' were the result of an investigation of the 'love
in-idleness' growing at Farringford. He made them nearly all

on the spot, and said them to me (as they are) next day." 2

The poet was a student of Nature. He had the ability to express his thoughts about the common things of life. Tennyson observed that:

"Once in a golden hour I cast to earth a seed. Up there came a flower The people said a weed."

He watched this seed grow into a beautiful flower, and not the weed people believed it to be.

(1) A Memoir: v.2;pp.97-98
(2) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.923



"The Higher Pantheism" was written for the Metaphysical Society in 1869. Tennyson expresses his philosophical opinion on the nature of "being".

"The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, And the plains --"

are thought into existence by "Him who reigns". Creation continues to exist because

"God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice."

In this poem, "The Higher Pantheism", Tennyson thinks of the universe as a vision, but the vision is distorted and imperfect, because we are distorted and imperfect. Hence he says:

"Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which He seems?"
The Poet Laureate never definitely answered this question. Stopford A. Brooke has this to say: "He believes that the life of God is there, but what we see and feel in Nature tells us nothing true about that life. We only see that distorted image of it which is mirrored by our imperfection. Hence, even when Tennyson wrote about Nature within this quasi-pantheistic theory, he could not feel any love for her, nor attribute any life to her, because she was only a false picture of the true world."1

"A Dedication" is in praise, and respect of his wife.

There is no mistaking the reference:

"Dear, near and true -- no truer than Time himself Can prove you, tho' he make you evermore Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life Shoots to the fall."

The Poet Laureate expressed the greatest faith in his wife.

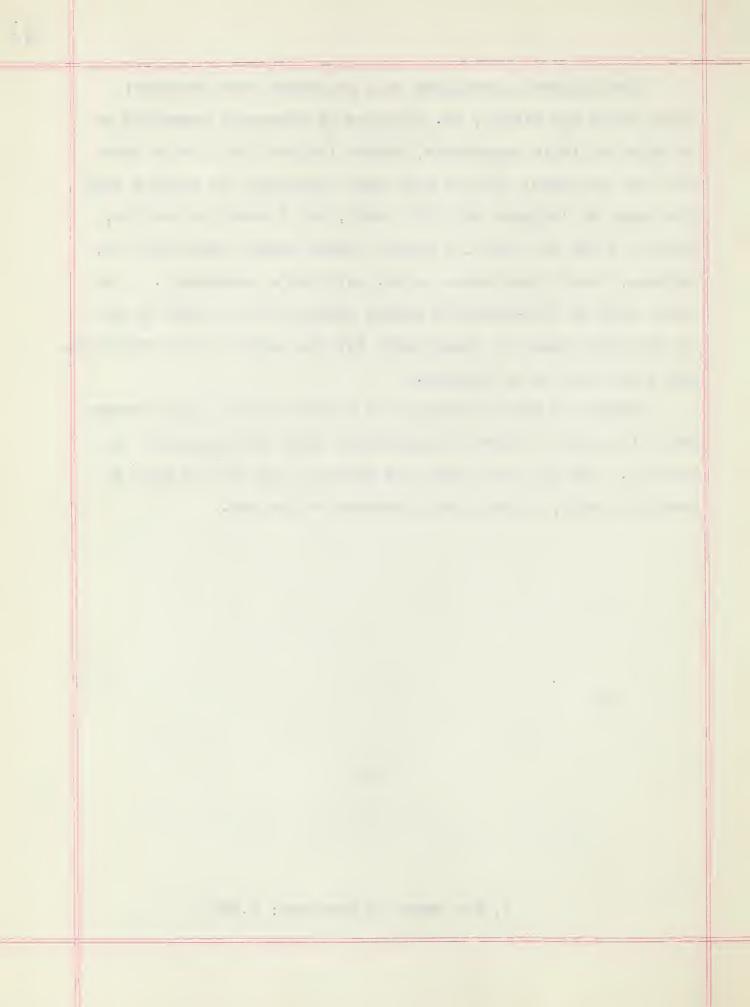
(1) Tennyson, His Art and Relation to Modern Life: p.478



"The Window" is prefaced by a statement from Tennyson:

"Four years ago (1863), Mr. Sullivan (a composer) requested me
to write a little song-cycle, German fashion, for him to exercise his art upon. He had been very successful in setting such
old songs as 'Orpheus with his lute', and I drest up for him,
partly in the old style, a puppet, whose almost only merit is,
perhaps, that it can dance to Mr. Sullivan's instrument. I am
sorry that my four-year-old puppet should have to dance at all
in the dark shadow of these days; but the music is now completed,
and I am bound by my promise!1

Affairs in Europe were now at a grave crisis, and Tennyson was not at all in favor of publishing songs that appeared so trivial. The poet had given his promise, and did not wish to break his word, showing the character of the man.



## Chapter V

The next chapter will be devoted entirely to the poet's masterpiece, his "In Memoriam". This elegy grew out of the loss of Hallam. The period of almost complete silence was to be productive of his best work. "In Memoriam" was written at various times between the period 1833-1849. The apparent contradictions are due to this. It expresses the moods, ideas and thoughts, all of which were influenced by Hallam's death. Tennyson is said not to have intended to collect and connect these experiences.

The poem, as a whole, reveals all the varying shades of emotion and philosophy "fought through" by Tennyson. It is also a biographical account of his struggle with his philosophy of life, of his idea of God, coupled with his opinions of free will and immortality.

The poem was published anonymously at first. Due to the manner in which it is written, many people were confused as to its authorship. The scientists admired it, since it had taken a fair attitude towards science. One critic thought a widow had written it; the continual references to the loss of a man suggesting this. Another critic stated that it was a complete record of the years of emotional and philosophical changes.

To me it would seem that Tennyson's credo is found in the introduction.

"By faith, and faith alone, embrace, Believing where we cannot prove."

7(1) 

The reason for this is that Tennyson wrote the introduction after having completed the poem in 1849.

In the first stanza, he continues to admit creation and to appeal to immortal Love:

".....and lo, thy foot Is on the skull which thou hast made."

The poet believes that God will not forsake man for he writes:

"Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him; thou art just."

The passage just quoted is a good proof of his belief in Immortality. According to Tennyson, "knowledge is of things we see".

Early in the proem, we see Tennyson's love for Hallam for in stanza ten there is a hope that Hallam resides in God;

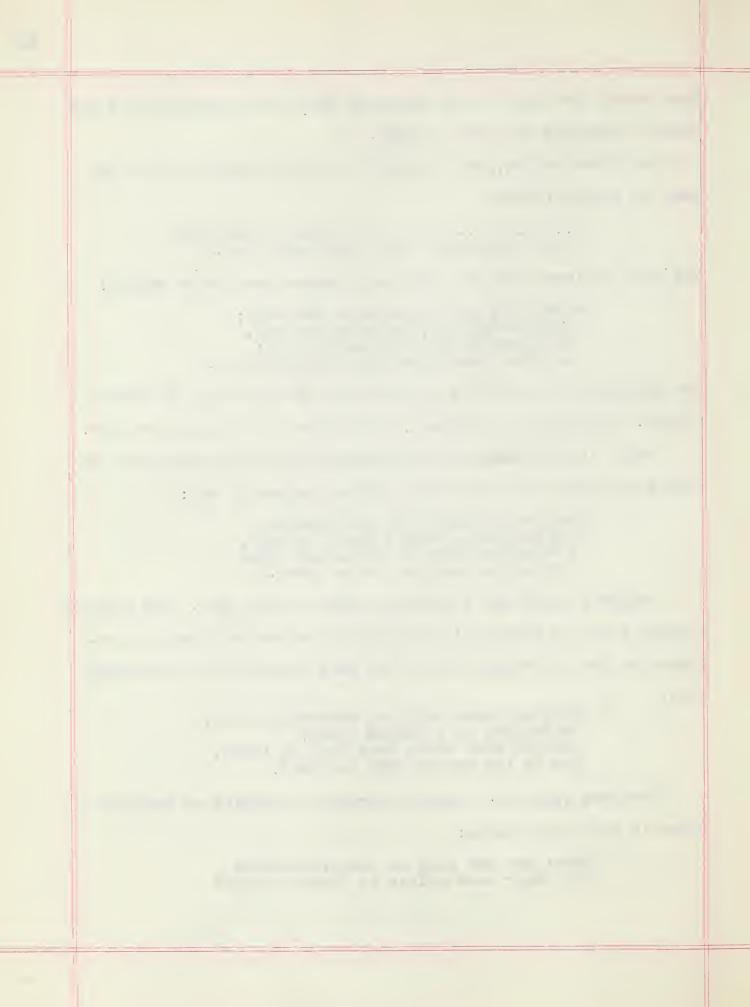
"Forgive my grief for one removed, Thy creature, whom I found so fair, I trust he lives in thee, and there I find him worthier to be loved."

Hallam's death was a terrible shock to the poet. The anguish brought about by Tennyson's struggle for a new faith and his reliance on God is brought out in the last stanza of the introduction:

"Forgive these wild and wandering cries, Confusions of a wasted youth; Forgive them where they fail in truth, And in thy wisdom make me wise",

The poem opens with another personal viewpoint of Tennyson's found in the first stanza:

"That men may rise on stepping-stones Of their dead selves to higher things"



Knowing his life, one would immediately realize that Tennyson makes reference to his creed "That out of the troubles of life, men may rise to something better than they were before the day of trouble came".1

This belief he finds difficult to follow. To Tennyson, the utter desolation expressed in Cantos II - VI, is ever present with him. The years of silence following the death of his friend are reflected in these passages. The poet receives no consolation in the fact,

"That 'Loss is common to the race',"
found in Canto VI, stanza 2, for in the very next stanza he adds:

"That loss is common would not make My own less bitter, rather more."

Stanzas 5-6 refer to the disappointment Tennyson felt. "My father was writing to Arthur Hallam in the hour that he died."2

The following explain this statement:

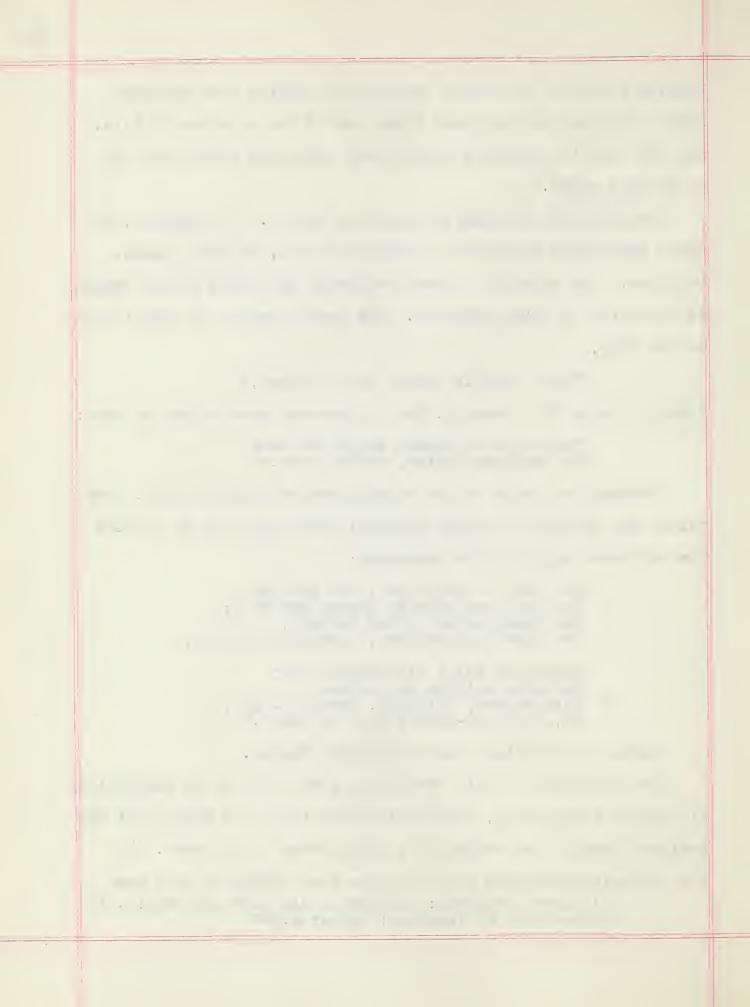
"Ye know no more than I who wrought At that last hour to please him well; Who mused on all I had to tell, And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home; And ever met him on his way With wishes, thinking, 'here to-day', Or, 'here to-morrow will he come'."

Hallam at this time was in Southern Europe.

The remainder of this section is given over to an enumeration of various casualities, ending with the story of a young girl who anxiously awaits the return of a father "who is no more". In the comparison Tennyson states in the last stanza of this same (1) Alfred Tennyson: A Study of His Life and Work:p.119

(2) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.928



Canto:

"O what to her shall be the end? And what to me remains of good? To her, perpetual maidenhood, And unto me no second friend".

Tennyson believed that the only manner of assuaging his terrible hurt was to cry out. He felt also the need of visiting the places where he used to meet Hallam, bringing home to the Poet Laureate the sense of his loss. "So he goes to the house where Hallam used to live (67 Wimpole Street), and here the lonliness of it all breaks in upon him with renewed force. The whole scene is melancholy. It is expressed in the last stanza of Canto VII:

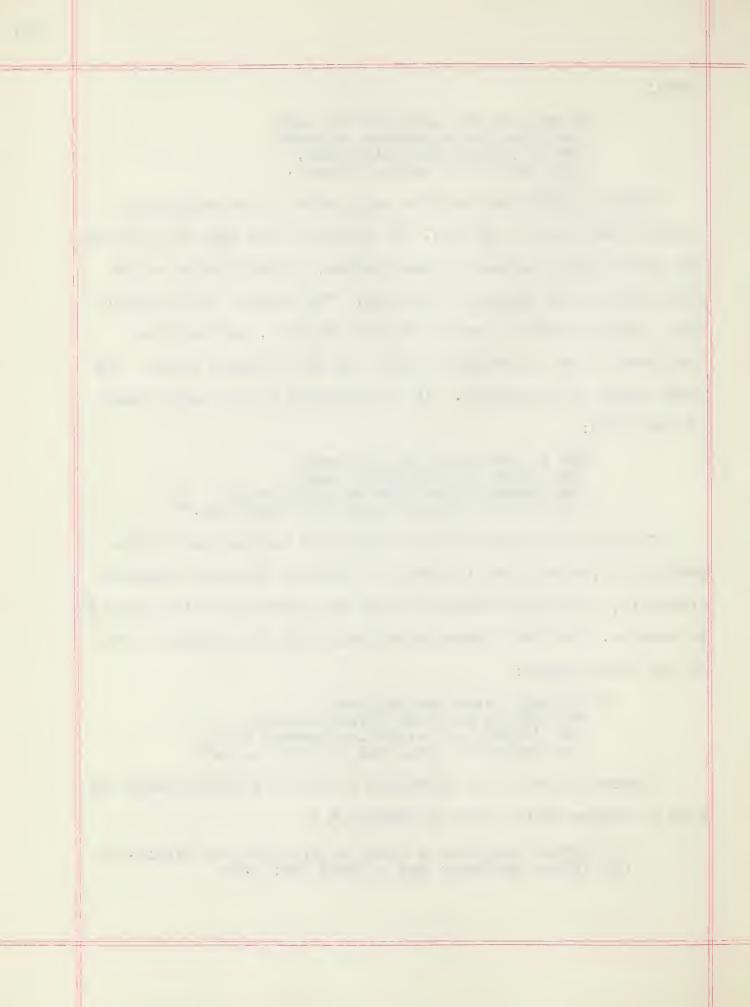
'He is not here; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.'"1

The whole of Canto VIII is comparable to the time of the poet's life, when after the death of Hallam, Tennyson wandered aimlessly, not knowing where to turn for solace in this period of depression. The Poet Laureate is truly like the forsaken lover in the first stanza:

"A happy lover who has come
To look on her that loves him well,
Who 'lights and rings the gateway bell,
And learns her gone and far from home."

"Cantos IX and X are addressed to the ship that brought the body of Arthur Hallam home to England." 2

(1) Alfred Tennyson; A Study of His Life and Work; p.119 (2) Alfred Tennyson; How to Know Him; p.89



"Fair ship, that from the Italian shore Sailest the placid ocean-plains With my lost Arthur's loved remains, Spread thy full wings, and waft him oe'r."

The last stanza of Canto IX is the reason why critics at first believed that the poem was written by a widow:

"My Arthur, whom I shall not see Till all my widow'd race be run; Dear as the mother to the son, More than my brothers are to me."

Canto XI contains a feference to the Lincolnshire wold, from which the whole stretch of marsh to the sea is visible.

"Calm and deep peace on this high wold, And on these dews that drench the furze, And all the silvery gossamers That twinkle into green and gold."

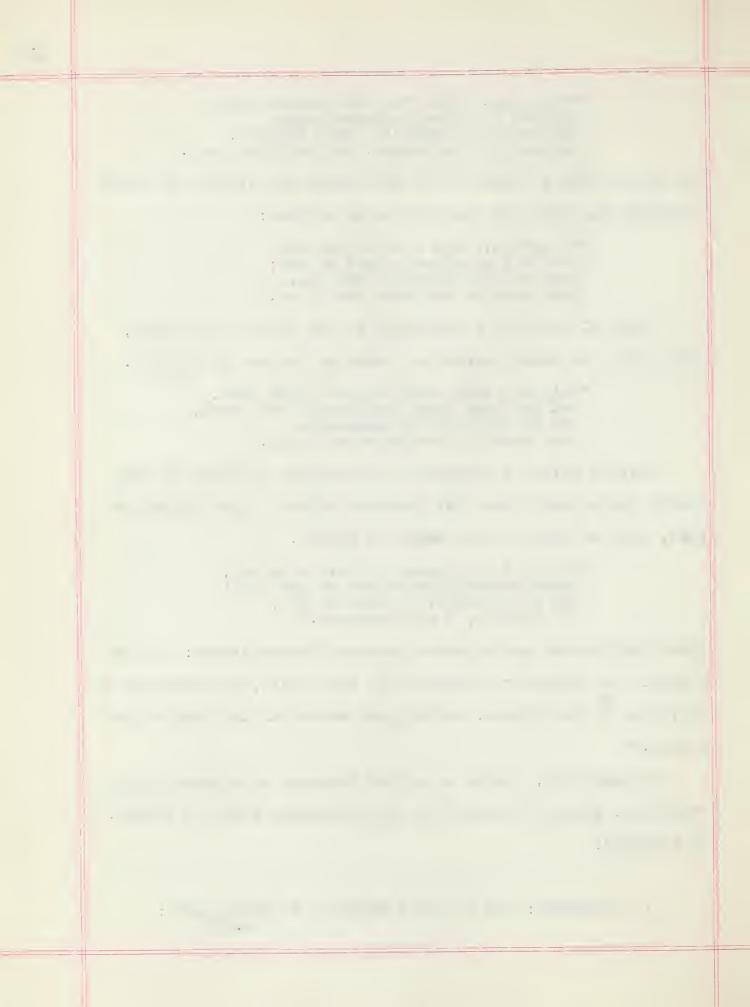
Another point of interest in this Canto is found in the fourth stanza where the Poet Laureate refers to the autumn of 1833, when he hears of the death of Hallam.

"Calm and deep peace in this wide air, These leaves that redden to the fall; And in my heart, if calm at all, If any calm, a calm despair."

About the passage quoted above Stopford Brooke states: "It is autumn; the leaves are reddening to their fall, the chestnut is pattering to the ground, as the poet waits for the body of his friend."1

In Canto XII, stanza 4, Alfred Tennyson is expressing his reactions, when he beholds the ship returning with his friend. He exclaims:

(1) Tennyson: His Art and Relation to Modern Life: p.213



The next Canto once more refers to the period in Tennyson's life when he "is like one who between sleep and waking can weep and has dream-fancies. Time will teach him the full reality of his loss, whereas now he scarce believes in it." This thought is reflected in the fourth stanza of this Canto:

"Come Time, and teach me, many years, I do not suffer in a dream For now so strange do these things seem, Mine eyes have leisure for their tears."

Tennyson believed Hallam to be as nearly perfect as man could be. The third stanza in the Canto XIV is a fitting memorial to one the poet loved so well:

"And if along with these should come The man I held as half-divine."

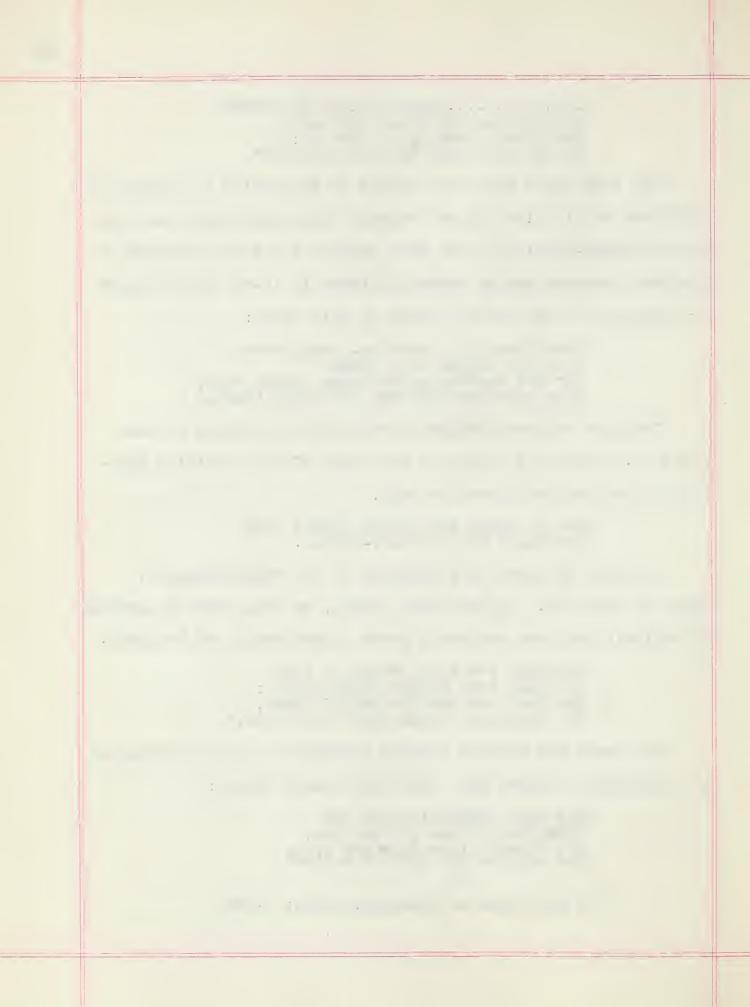
In Canto XV there is a contrast to the "calm despair", found in Canto XI. In the first stanza, we find that the arrival of Hallam's body has aroused a storm in the breast of Tennyson.

"To-night the winds begin to rise And roar from yonder dropping day: The last red leaf is whirl'd away, The rooks are blown about the skies."

The doubt and despair surging through the heart of Tennyson are reflected in Canto XVI. The last stanza states:

"And made that delirious man Whose fancy fuses old and new, And flashes into false and true. And mingles all without a plan?

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.928



There is no wonder, then that a friendship so great was the motivating force to a memorial as noble as "In Memoriam".

visiting the burial place of Hallam. "Half a mile to the south of Clevedon in Somersetshire stands Clevedon Church, 'obscure and solitary', on a lonely hill overlooking a wide expanse of water, where the Severn flows into the Briston Channel. It is dedicated to St. Andrew, the chancel being the original fisherman's chapel "I is in this graveyard, close to the sea, Arthur Hallam was buried. To Tennyson, expressed in the first stanza, there is the consolation of standing,

"Where he in English earth is laid, And from his ashes may be made The violet of his native land."

The opening line in Canto XIX,

"The Danube to the Severn gave",

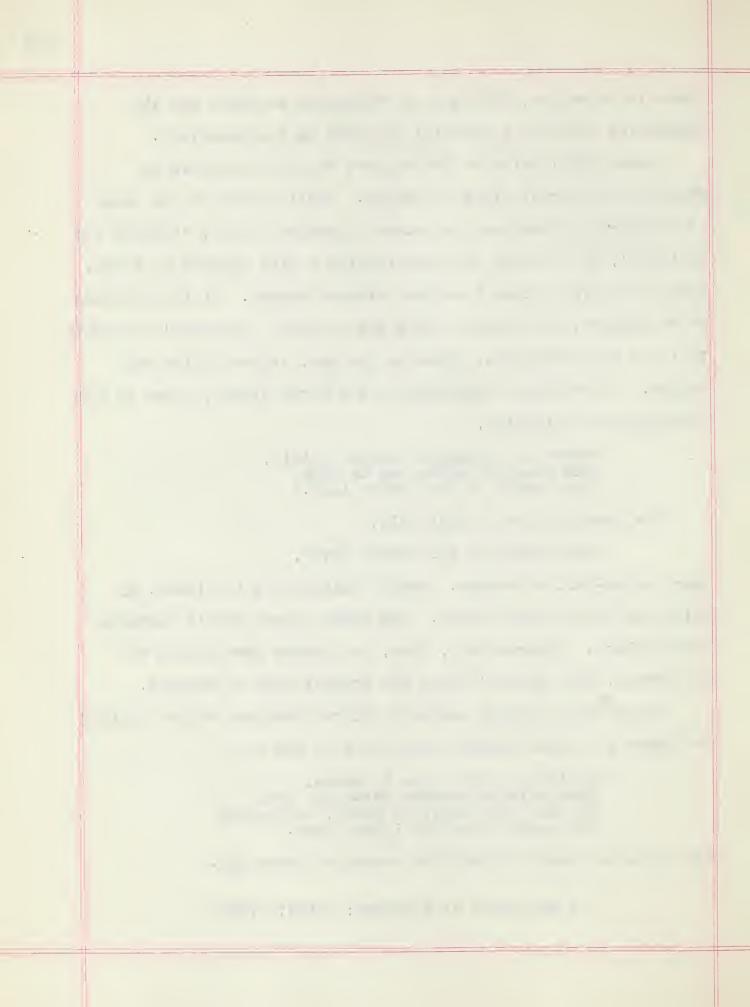
bears a two-fold reference. Arthur Hallam died in Vienna, by which the River Danube flows. The Severn flows by his Clevedon burial place. Figuratively, then, the Danube gave Hallam to the Severn, when Arthur's body was brought back to England.

Among other thought coming to Alfred Tennyson while visiting the grave of Arthur Hallam, was that this was not,

"A time to sicken and to swoon,
When Science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and charms
Her secret from the latest moon."

The above is found in the fifth stanza of Canto XXI.

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.925



Tennyson enjoyed Hallam's company at Cambridge. In the first two stanzas of Canto XXII, an allusion to those four happy years, 1828-1832, in:

"The path by which we twain did go, Which led by tracts that pleased us well, Thro' four sweet years arose and fell, From flower to flower, from snow to snow;

And we with singing cheered the way, And, crown'd with all the season lent, From April on to April went, And glad at heart from May to May."

Alfred's happiness was soon shattered. The shadow of Death is seen in the next stanza:

"But where the path we walk'd began To slant the fifth autumnal slope, As we descended following Hope There sat the Shadow fear'd of man."

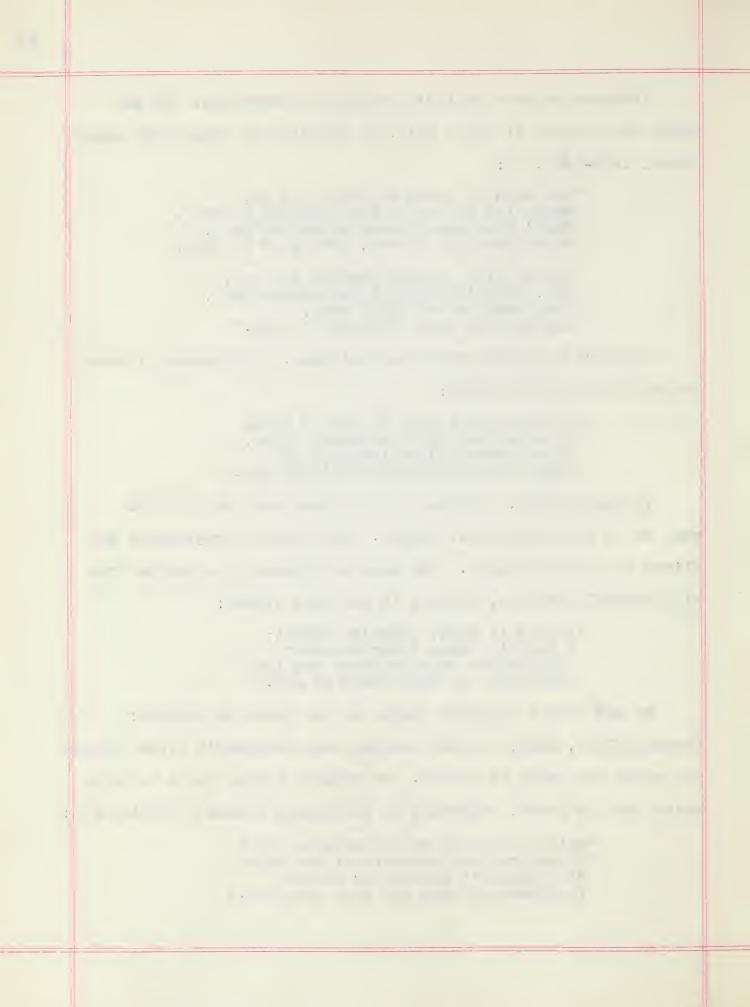
In Canto XXVII, Tennyson records that part of his life when he is to triumph over sorrow. This section represents the climax of the first part. The poet is beginning to emerge from his heartfelt anguish, stating in the last stanza:

"I hold it true, whate'er befall; I feel it, when I sorrow most; 'Tis better to have loved and lost Than never to have loved at all."

We now have a complete change in the trend of thought;

Cantos XXVIII, XXIX, and XXX dealing with Tennyson's first Christmas after the death of Hallam. He wonders how he dares to celebrate such an event, expressed in the second stanza of Canto XXIX:

"Which brings no more a welcome guest To enrich the threshold of the night With shower'd largess of delight In dance and song and game and jest."



Canto XXX, stanza 3, contains a reference to the Somersby home. "The hall was the dining-room at Somersby which my father built."1

"At our old pastimes in the hall We gamboll'd making vain pretence Of gladness, with an awful sense Of one mute Shadow watching all."

Tennyson wonders what Hallam is doing, irked at the thought that he cannot see beyond the grave. The fact that Lazarus,

"......left his charnel-cave And home to Mary's house returned,"

as stated in the first stanza of Canto XXXI, moves the Poet

Laureate to thought on Immortality, resulting in his reactions,

found in Canto XXXIV, the first stanza:

"That life shall live for evermore Else earth is darkness at the core."

In these words, for Tennyson is almost convinced of an after-life, there is the suggestion that the ideals in human life are a testimony to the possibility of Immortality.

Included in the poet's discussion on Immortality, are Cantos

XXXV to XLI. Tennyson and Hallam are parted. The Poet Laureate

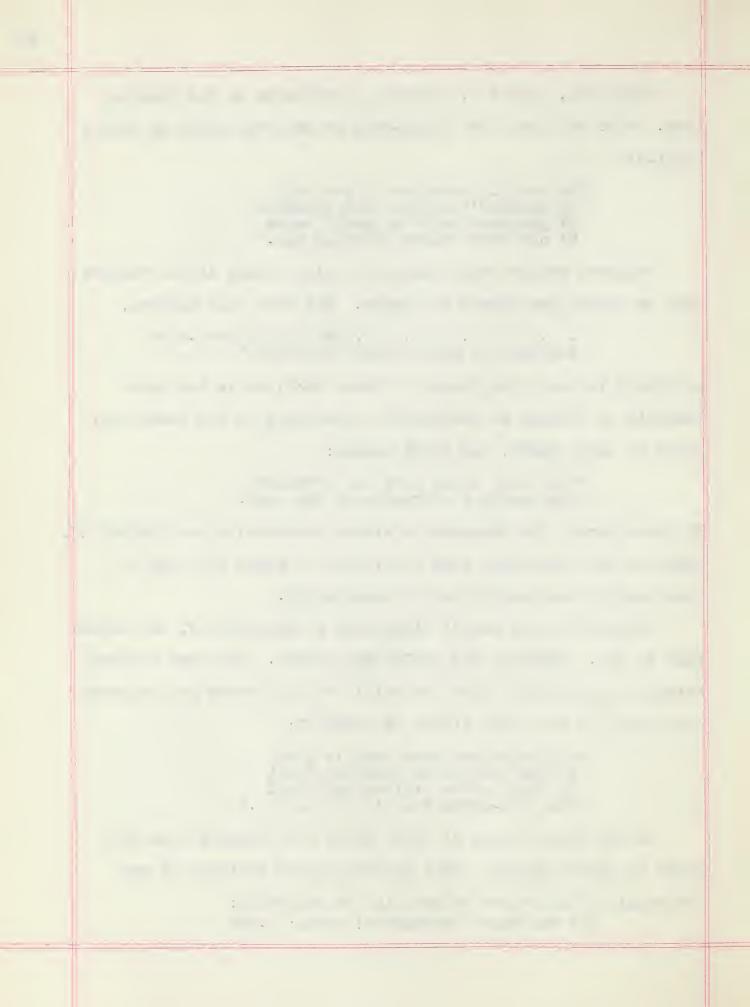
attempts to indicate where the spirit of his friend has departed

and states in the fifth stanza of Canto XL:

"And, doubtless, unto thee is given A life that bears immortal fruit In those great offices that suit The full-grown energies of heaven."

In the first stanza of Canto XLII, his thoughts once more drift to Arthur Hallam. That Tennyson never believed he was the equal of his friend is seen in the following:

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes: p.929



"I vex my heart with fancies dim:
He still outstript me in the race;
It was but unity of place
That made me dream'd I ranked with him".

I shall discuss Cantos XLVII and CXXX jointly. It seems to me proper to present these together for they both deal with Tennyson's viewpoints on Pantheism. Canto XLVII is a refutation of Pantheism, for here he argues against the belief that everything is God. In Canto CXXX, Tennyson appears to be in favor of Pantheism, for in this section of the poem the poet expresses his convictions that God is to be found in everything. We must not lose sight of the fact that this poem was written at various times between the period 1833-1849.

Hallam Lord Tennyson offers us his father's idea on this subject:

"The individuality lasts after death, and we are not utterly

be
absorbed into the Godhead. If we are to finally merged in the
Universal Soul, Love asks us to have at least one more parting
before we lose ourselves."

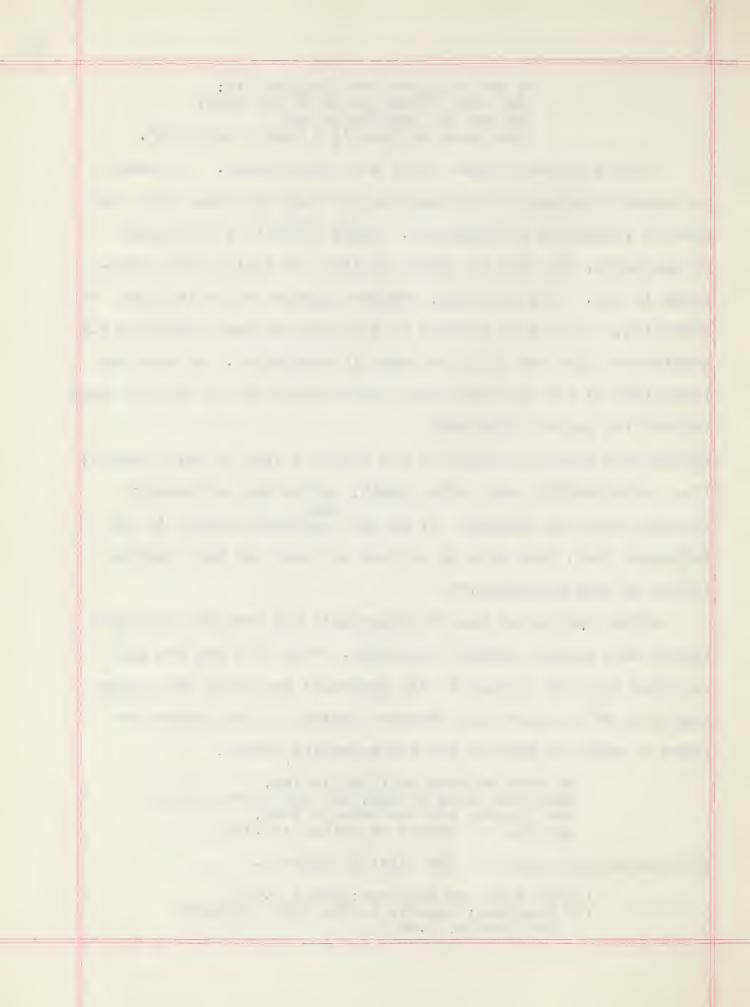
Arthur Hallam had come to Tennyson's aid when the poet most needed help against despair and doubt. "Nor do I see how one can read the 50th section of 'In Memoriam' and doubt any longer that here we have the real Tennyson crying in agony across the grave to what had been to him the essential Hallam:

'Be near me when my light is low, When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick And tingle; and the hear is sick, And all the wheels of Being slow.'"2

The stanza just quoted is the first of Canto L.

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.932 (2) Tennyson; Aspects of His Life Character

and Poetry: p.69



The poet is crying out to his friend to be near him as he passes this period of doubt. Tennyson actually experienced this struggle between faith and doubt, which now brings to a close the second division of the poem.

Hallam Tennyson offers the following rote on the last stanza of Canto LI: "The queen quoted this verse,

'Be near us when we climb or fall: Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours With larger other eyes than ours, To make allowances for us all',

to my father about the Prince Consort, just after his death, and told him that it had brought her great comfort."1

The first two stanzas of Canto LIV deal with religion.

"These are the religious views of Frederick Denison Maurice."2

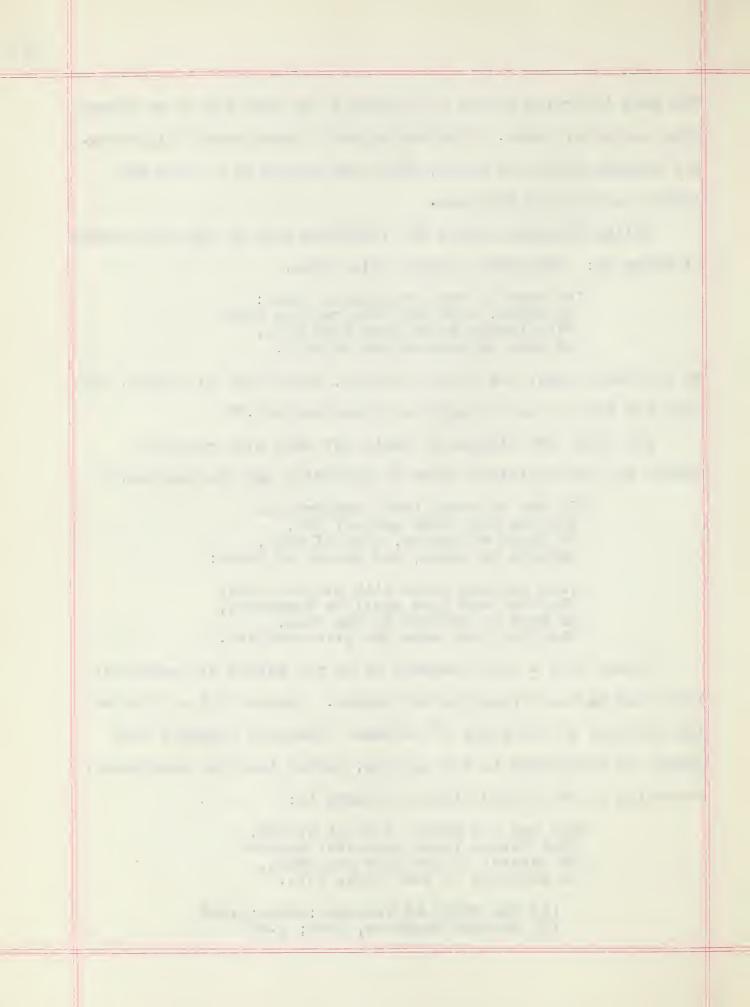
"Oh yet we trust that somehow good Will be the final goal of ill, To pangs of nature, sins of will, Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

That nothing walks with aimless feet; That not one life shall be destroyed, Or cast as rubbish to the void, When God hath made the pile complete."

Cantos LIII - LVIII present to us the period of Tennyson's life when he was struggling with doubt. Cantos LIII - LV offer the conflict in the light of science. Tennyson suggests that Nature is interested in the species, rather than the individual, recording in the second stanza of Canto LV:

"Are God and Nature then at strife, That Nature lends such evil dreams? So careful of the type she seems, So careless of the single life."

(1) The Works of Tennyson:notes; p.933 (2) Century Magazine, 1897; p.252



The thought of Canto LVI is in conformity with Tennyson's belief that life isn't worth-while, unless there is Immortality.

Alfred Lord Tennyson grieved deeply the loss of Hallam.

Cantos LVIII - LXV are uttered in praise of this dear friend.

There is another allusion to Hallam's burying place in the two lines found in the first stanza of Canto LXVII,

"I know that in thy place of rest By that broad water of the west",

meaning Clevedon close to the Bristol Channel. In the last line, Tennyson is able to see in his sleep,

"Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn."

One year has passed, Canton LXXII recording this fact. When Tennyson awakes there is a reference in stanza 2 to the

"Day, when my crown'd estate begun To pine in that reverse of Doom",

the anniversary of Hallam's death.

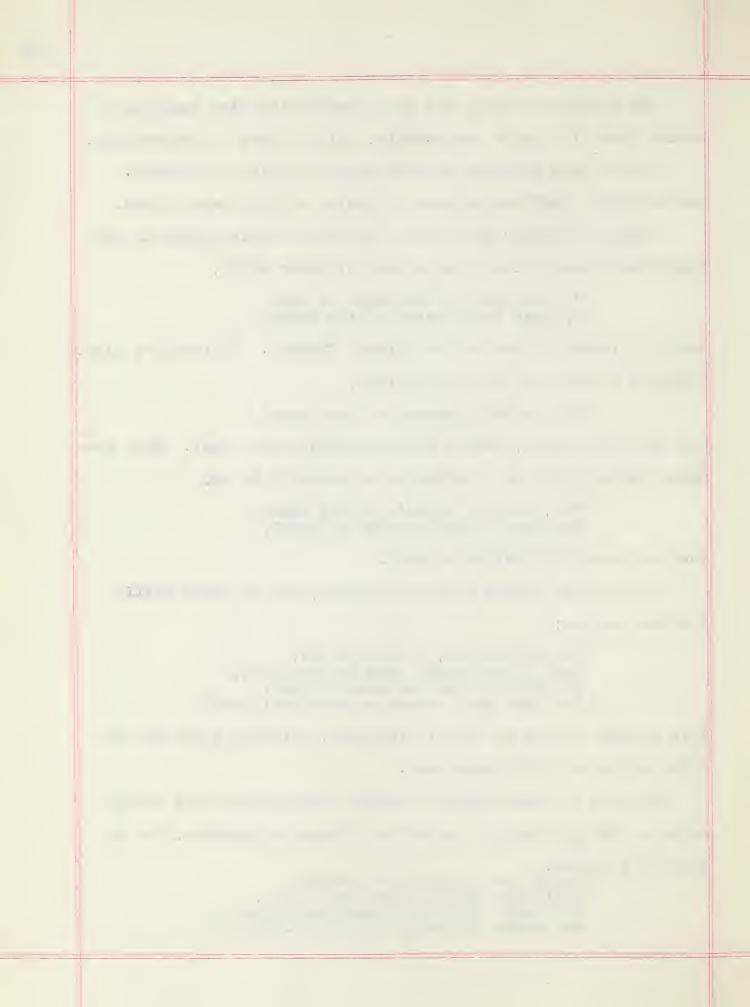
Perhaps God needed Hallam elsewhere, for in Canto LXIII the poet states:

"So many worlds, so much to do, Such little done, such things to be, How know I what had need of thee, For thou wert strong as thou wert true?"

This thought helped to console Tennyson, bringing to an end the third division of "In Memoriam".

And now in Canto LXXVIII another Christmas eve has rolled around. The poet wonders about the changed atmosphere, for in the third stanza,

"As in the winters left behind Again our ancient games had place, The mimic picture's breathing grace And dance and song and hoodman-blind,"



Tennyson does not believe that time will ever soften his sorrow or detract from his love, but rather as expressed in the second stanza of Canto LXXXI:

"More years had made me love thee more."

According to Stopford A Brooke, "The spring of 1835 arrives in the eighty-third Canto." It represents the period in the Poet's life when he is quietly reminiscent in his grief for Hallam. For with the coming of spring, the poet expresses his feelings in:

"What stays thee from the clouded noons, Thy sweetness from its proper place? Can trouble live with April days Or sadness in the summer moons?"1

Tennyson again begins to reminisce in Canto LXXXIV, and we are taken back to the days when Hallam was courting his sister in the second stanza:

"When thou shouldst link thy life with one Of mine own house, and boys of thine Had babbled 'Uncle' on my knee."

As difficult as life's struggle was, the Poet Laureate could suffer all,

"Till on me this message falls,
That in Vienna's fatal walls
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept,"

found in Canto LXXXV, stanza five. This is a reference to Hallam's death in 1833.

The entire 87th Canto describes Trinity college, which he visits. Passing again through familiar scenes, Tennyson hears once more the shouting of the under-graduates. Finally, he

(1) Tennyson; His Art and Relation to Modern Life; p.213

screws up enough courage, as he records the fourth stanza,

"To see the rooms in which he dwelt", only to find that in the next stanza that,

"Another name was on the door."

All was changed, and the room where debates were often held is occupied by a crowd of youths and in this same section,

".....all within was noise Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys That crash'd the glass and beat the floor."

Canto LXXXIX tells of Tennyson's enjoyment of his visit to Trinity, the first stanza making us realize the trip must have been in the summer. For we have:

"Witch-elms that counterchange the floor Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright: And thou with all thy breadth and height Of foliage, towering sycamore."

Charles Tennyson became a clergyman. On May 24th, 1836, he married Louisa Sellwood, the youngest sister of Alfred's wife "My Uncle Charles and his bride left for their honeymoon on the Rhine, a tour which was alluded to in 'In Memoriam', Canto XCVIII, stanzas one and two:

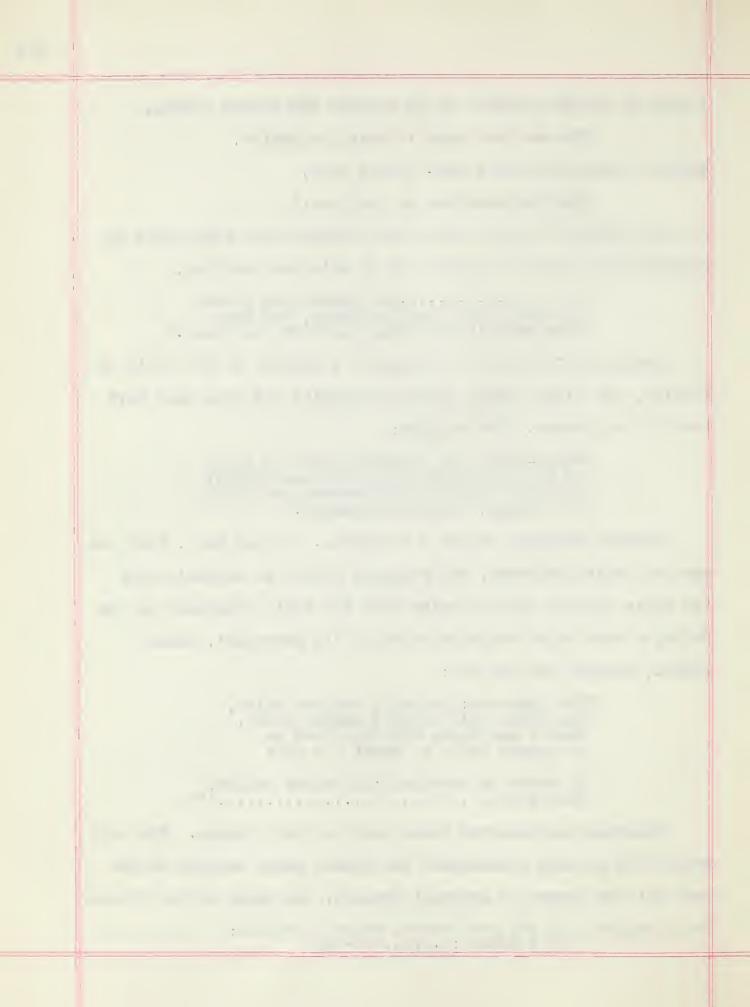
'You leave us: you will see the Rhine, And those fair hills I sailed below, When I was there with him; and go By summer belts of wheat and vine

To where he breathed his latest breath, That city......"1

Tennyson had resolved never more to visit Vienna. The city which held so much enchantment for others means nothing to the poet but the memory of greatest tragedy, the death of his friend.

He is emphatic in the next stanza where he states:

(1) A Memoir:v.1;pp.148-149



"Let her great Danube rolling fair Enwind her isles, unmarked of me: I have not seen, I will not see

In Canto XCIX, we have a reference to the second anniversary of Hallam's death. It is expressed in the first stanza:

"Risest thou thus, dim dawn, again, So loud with voices of the birds, So thick with lowings of the herd, Day, when I lost the flower of men."

The Tennysons had lived at Somersby for several years after the death of Alfred's father. It was not until 1837 that they left the beloved scenes of the rectory. The sentiment the family felt at leaving is seen in Canto CII, stanza one:

"We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky;
The roofs, that heard our earliest cry,
Will shelter one of stranger race."

Another Christmas is celebrated beginning with Canto CIII.
Tennyson's joy comes at the thought that in a vision:

"The man we loved was there on deck, But thrice as large as man he bent To greet us. Up the side I went And fell in silence on his neck."

The above thought, found in stanza eleven, refers to Hallam.

In the last stanza of Canto CIV, there is a reference to Tennyson's home at High Beech. Hallam Lord Tennyson records the line:

"But all is new unhallow'd ground,"
as referring to, "High Beech Epping Forest (where we were now living)."

(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.937

 Continuing on to Canto CV, we find that there is mention of Tennyson's father in the second stanza. It is close to Christmas, and the poet's thoughts drift to:

"Our father's dust is left alone
And silent under other snows:
There in due time the woodbine blows,
The violet comes, but we are gone."

The Christmas eve celetrated in Canto CVI is less gloomy. In the last stanza, "bells that ring in the new year, ring in faith and hope and consolation.

'Ring in the valiant man and free, The larger heart, the kindlier hand; Ring out the darkness of the land, Ring in the Christ that is to be.'"l

This closes the fourth part of the poem. Now we are given an indication that the outlook is to be gloomy no longer.

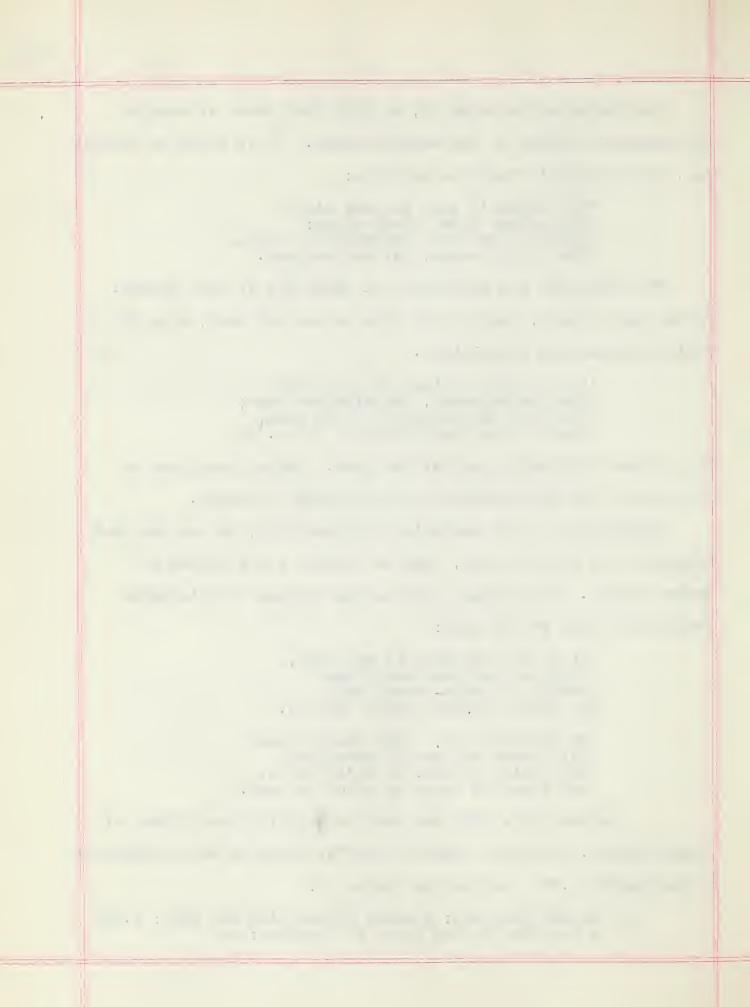
Immediately in the beginning of Canto CVII, we see the Poet Laureate in a happier mood, when he recalls the birthday of Arthur Hallam. The opening and closing stanzas of this Canto reflect the mood of the poet:

"It is the day when he was born, A bitter day that early sank Behind a purple-frosty bank Of vapour leaving night forlorn.

We keep the day, With festal cheer, With books and music, surely we Will drink to him, whate'er he be, And sing the songs he loved to hear."

Cantos CIX - CXIV are used in extolling the virtues of Arthur Hallam. Tennyson spoke of him "as being as near perfection as man might be."2 The closing stanza of:

(1) Alfred Tennyson: A Study of His Life and Work: p.126 (2) A Handbook to the Works of Tennyson: pp.



"I would the great world grew like thee, Who grewest not alone in power And Knowledge, but by year and hour In reverence and in charity."

is a great tribute.

Tennyson has won his fight against doubt and despair. In Canto CXVI, the feelings the poet experiences for Hallam are indicative of the change which actually came over the poet's life. Now in stanzas three and four it is,

"Not all regret: the face will shine Upon me, while I muse alone; And that dear voice, I once have known, Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me For days of happy commune dead: Less yearning for the friendship fled, Than some strong bond which is to be."

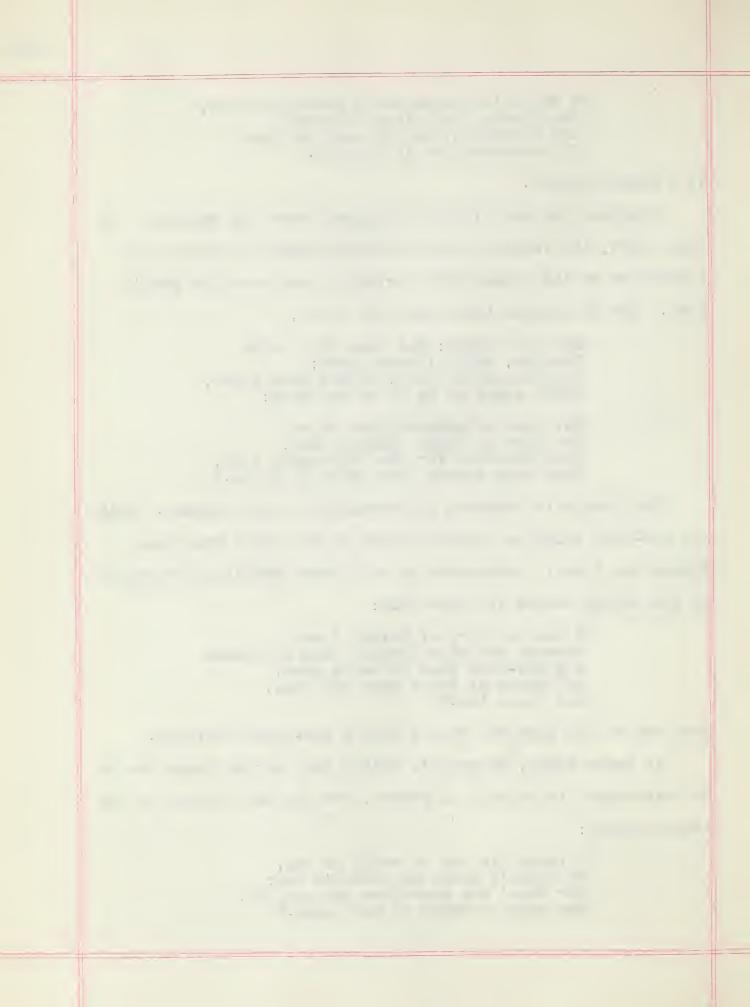
The change in Tennyson has brought him more courage. With his new-born faith he ventures forth to the house where his friend had lived. Contrasted to his former feelings, he states in the second stanza of Canto CXIX:

"I hear a chirp of birds; I see Betwixt the black fronts long withdrawn A light-blue lane of early dawn, And think of early days and thee, And bless thee!

From now on the poem was filled with a new-found optimism.

In Canto CXXIV, Tennyson's belief that he has found God is not attributed to science or reason, for the poet states in the second stanza:

"I found Him not in world or sun, Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye; Nor thro' the questions men may try, The petty cobwebs we have spun."



Rather because the Poet Laureate felt that there is a God, does he assert his faith in the fifth stanza:

"A warmth within the breast would melt The freezing reason's colder part, And like a man in wrath the heart Stood up and answer'd, 'I have felt.'"

Tennyson was undoubtedly influenced by his age, a period of ever-changing beliefs and theories. That the Poet Laureate finally emerged from this depressing gloom with a faith of his own is seen in the last stanza of the poem:

"With faith that comes of self-control The truths that never can be proved Until we close with all we loved And all we flow from, soul in soul".

The Epilogue of "In Memoriam" is an account of the wedding of his sister, Cecilia, to Edmund Lushington. In the second stanza, Tennyson admits the joy of this marriage in:

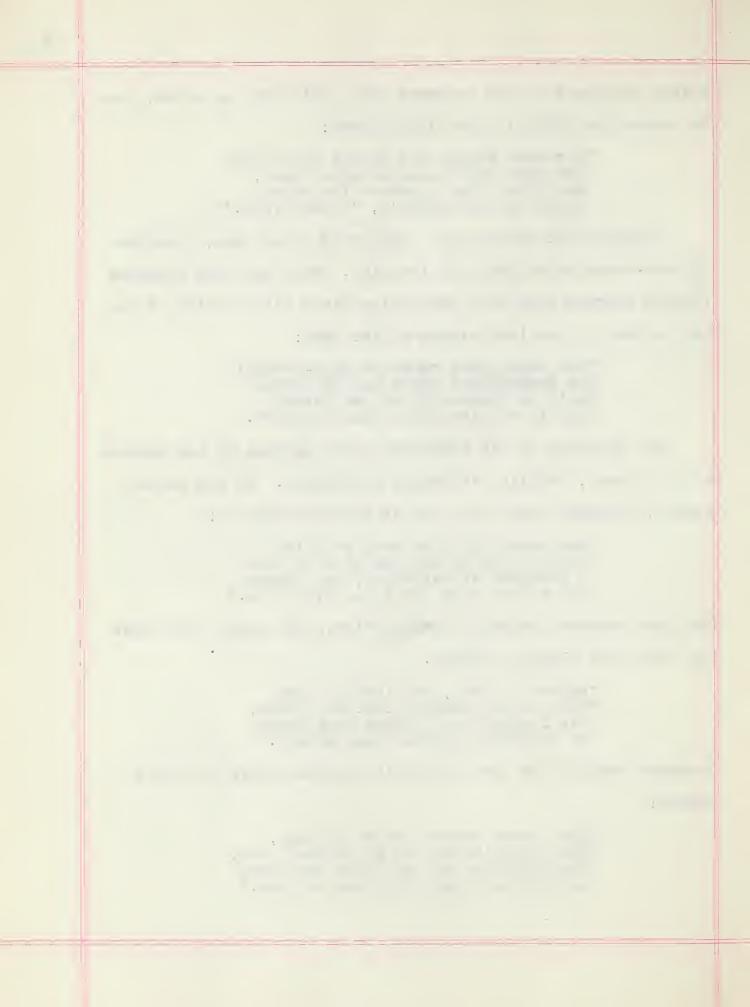
"Nor have I felt so much of bliss Since first he told me that he loved A daughter of our house, nor proved Since that dark day a day like this."

The poet becomes personal in stanza five, and reveals that love has taken the place of regret.

"Regret is dead, but love is more Than in the summers that are flown, For I myself with these have grown To something greater than before."

Tennyson recalls the time Cecilia's childhood days in stanza twelve:

"For I that danced her on my knee, That watch'd her on her nurse's arm, That shielded all her life from harm At last must part with her to thee."



The Poet Laureate retires from the dance to wander out beneath the stars, and there think of God and Hallam in the last two stanzas:

"Whereof the man, that with me trod This planet, was a noble type Appearing ere the times were ripe, That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves, One God, one law, one element, And one far-off divine event, To which the whole creation moves."



## Chapter VI

"Maud" is monodrama, only one character speaking. In this poem Tennyson's personal views on commercialism are found. The hero longs for war to lift men above this desire for greed. The poet claims that the evils of the nation are greater than war. Probably, in the struggle for supremacy, mankind would have lost this avarice. The Poet Laureate was criticised severely by some at the publishing of this poem. Little did they realize that he was struggling for an ideal!

The greater part of "Maud"was written in Sir John Simeon's garden at Swainston. "The poet used to sit at work under the shade of a spreading cedar on the lawn, and the view which peeped through its branches doubtless suggested many of the touches in the garden scene of 'Maud'."1

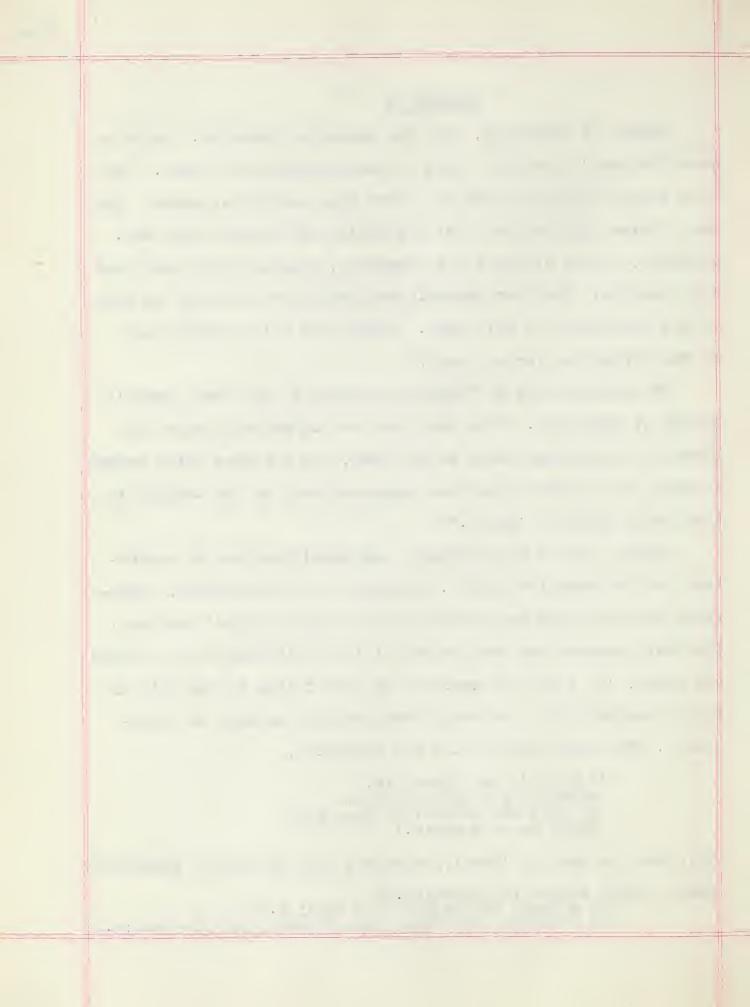
Milnes, one of the Apostles, had asked Tennyson to contribute to the "Annuals" (1837). Tennyson at first refused, afterwards yielding when he saw how he had injured Milnes' feeling. The Poet Laureate had been roused at the irritation of his friend and wrote: 'If I had not sworn to be true friend to you till my latest death-ruckle, you would have gone far to make me indignant'. The poem sent was the one beginning,

'O that 't were possible, After long grief and pain, To find the arms of my true love Round me once again.'

This was the germ of 'Maud', conceived like so many of Tennyson's poems, years before its ripening."2

(1) A Study of His Life and Work: p.141

(2) Tennyson; His Homes, His Friends, and His Work:p.50



Many of the descriptions of nature are taken from his observations at Farringford, In section III, there is a reference to a "broad-flung shipwrecking roar", explained thus by his son's notes. "In the Isle of Wight the roar can be heard nine miles away from the beach."1

In section X, there is a verse beginning,

"Last week came one to the country town, To preach our little army down, And play the game of the despot kings, Tho! the state has done it and twice as well: This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy things, Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton and rings, Even in dreams to the clink of his pence, This huckster put down war,"

Tennyson, who has the hero favoring war because it invokes the best of man's spirit in self-sacrifice and idealism, attacks those who would have peace-at-all-price. "The Westminster Feview said this was an attack on John Bright. I did not know at the time that he was a Quaker. (It was not against Quakers but against peace-at-all-price men that the hero fulminates. "2"

The editor of "The Works of Tennyson" relates how Lionel Tennyson was so named. Speaking about the line in Section VI of the third part of "Maud",

"As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast," the writer states: "On the 16th of March 1854 my father was looking through his (Farringford) study window at the planet 'Mars', 'as he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast', and so determined to name his second son who was born on that

(2) A Memoir: v.2; p.403

<sup>(1)</sup> The Works of Tennyson: notes: p.941

( ---- day, Lionel."1

The next poem to be considered, "The Sisters", is founded on a story told to Tennyson of a girl who had agreed to be the bridesmaid of her sister, although she secretly loved the groom. The allusion to the lake at Llanberis was drawn from Alfred's personal experience. It is recorded in,

"I came on lake Llanberis in the dark,
A moonless night with storm -- one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake."

"He always said that he remembered the lake as it looked in a flash of lightning, not as he saw it afterwards in the daytime."2

Concerning the piece, "Dedicatory Poem to the Princess Alice", the author of "A Handbook to the Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson" remarks:

"In December, 1878,

'.....the fatal kiss, Born of true life and love,'

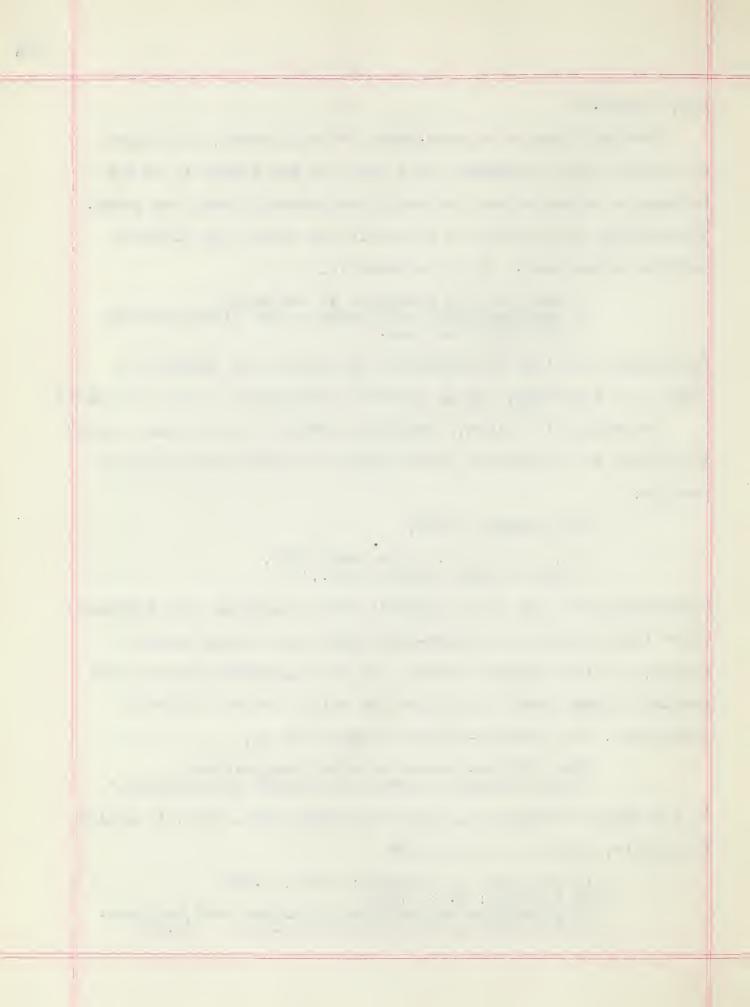
had touched the lips of the Queen's second daughter, the Princess Alice (Grand Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt); and to her sacred memory, in lines equally sacred, the Poet Laureate dedicated the poem."3 The Princess had kissed her child, who was ill with diphtheria. The soldier-brother referred to in,

"Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break through the yews and cypress of thy grave."

is the "Duke of Connaught, married on March 13th, 1879, to Louise

Marguerite, Princess of Prussia!4

- (1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.943
- (2) A Memoir: v.2; p.253
- (3) A Handbook to the Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson:
- (4) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.968 /p.368



About "The Defence of Lucknow" the poet wrote: "The old flag, used during the defence of the Residency, was hoisted on the Lucknow flagstaff by General Wilson, and the soldiers who still survived from the siege were all mustered on parade in honour of this poem, when my son Lionel (who died on his journey from India) visited Lucknow. A tribute overwhelmingly touching 10 Outram and Havelock, mentioned in the poem, were later to visit Tennyson at Aldworth, to be questioned closely by the poet. The Sir Henry Lawrence mentioned in the lines:

'Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave,' died of his wounds in 1857.

The last poem in this chapter to be treated is "De Profundis".

"At Twickenam again, in August, 1852, the second son, Hallam was born. We have already seen how vital a thing was fatherhood to the poet; his meditation on this event gave rise to the noble poem, 'Out of the Deep' (De Profundis), though it was not finished or published for many years to come."2 Tennyson's words,

"Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changeless world of changeless law",
are biographical, because they state his idea on life. Out of
this deep, this vast cosmos, this

".....nine months of antenatal gloom",
life finally has arrived. The Poet Laureate re-iterates his
belief.

"Wheron the Spirit of God moves as he will",

(1) A Memoir: v.2; p.254 (2) Alfred Lord Tennyson; How To Know Him:p.31 And at the same time each thing has a personality which explains why he believes,

".....that thou art thou, With power on thine own act and on the world."



# Chapter VII

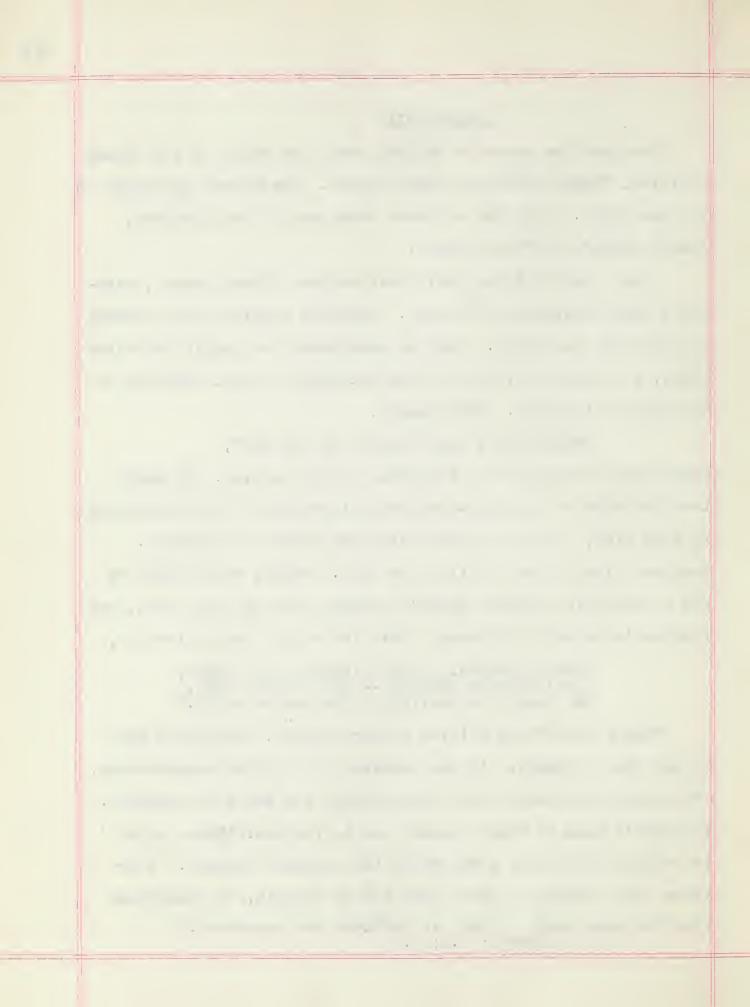
The next two poems to be dealt with are found in the volume entitled, "Enoch Arden and Other Poems". These were published in the year 1864. Only two of these works are to be discussed, "Enoch Arden" and "Sea Dreams".

A man could not very well have written "Enoch Arden", without a good knowledge of the sea. Tennyson acquired this through
his love for the water. That he understood the people he writes
about, is shown by his use of the colloquial terms, familiar to
the simple fishermen. For example,

"Then came a loud calling of the sea",
means only one thing to a fisherman of this period. It meant
that the echo of a ground-swell rang through the fishing-village.
At this time, a belief in mysticism was current in England.
Tennyson himself had a liking for this. Hence, we are able to
see a connection between Enoch's darkest hour on the island, and
Tennyson's belief in trances. This is found in such lines as,

"Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears, Tho' faintly merrily -- far and far away, He heard the pealing of the parish bells."

"Enoch Arden" was written at Farringford, Tennyson's home on the Isle of Wight. It was composed in a little summer-house, overlooking Freshwater Bay, taking about two weeks to complete. The poet's notes on "Enoch Arden" are as follows: "Thouch Arden is founded on a theme given me by the sculptor Woolner. I believe this particular story came out of Suffolk, but something like the same story is told in Brittany and elsewhere. "I (1) A Memoir: v.2: p.7



The next poem makes it clear to us why Tennyson is truly called the "poet of the people". He was constantly fighting for "right". He now lends a sympathetic ear to those who must labor for a living, suffering all the hardships of poverty. "The rascal mentioned in 'Sea Dreams',

"Read rascal in the motions of his back, And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee,"

was drawn from a man who had grossly cheated Tennyson in early life."1 The second stanza of the song coming at the end of the poem reflects Tennyson's love for children:

"What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away."

What the poet thought of satire is found in,

The above was given in answer to the question, "How like you this old satire?"

<sup>(1)</sup> A Memoir: v.1; p.429(2) A Handbook to the Works of Tennyson: p.216

# Chapter VIII

The next section will take us through those poems published about the years 1875-1876. This division, called "Tiresias and Other Poems", is dedicated to Robert Browning. Tennyson and Browning had become the best of friends; Browning had previously dedicated a Selection of poems to the Poet Laureate.

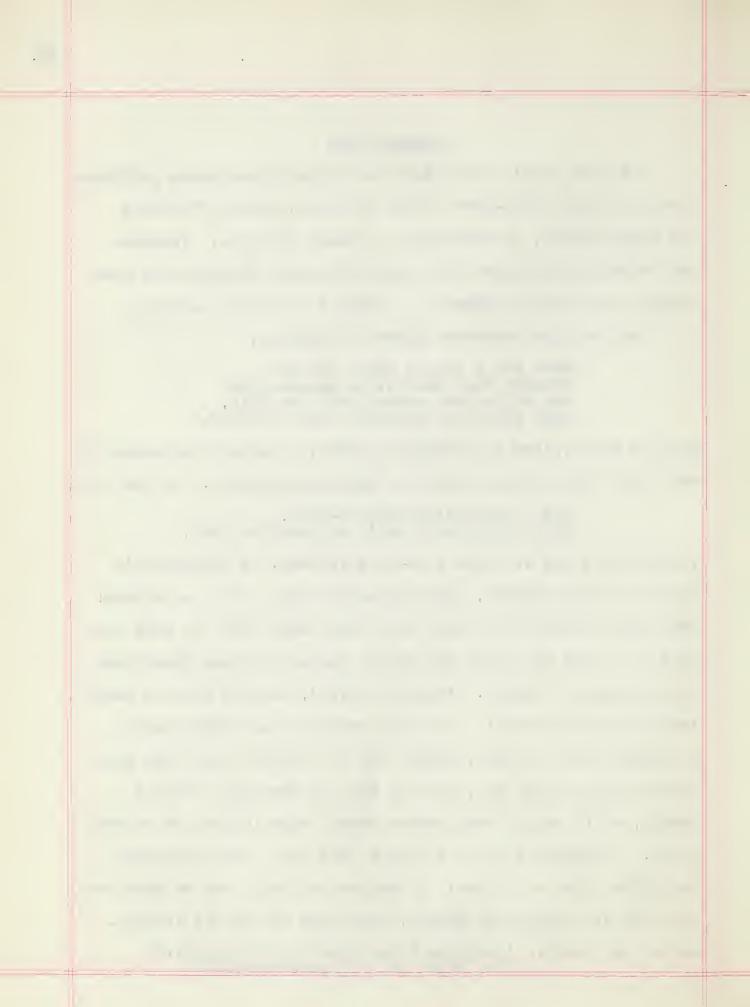
The Prologue describes Edward Fitzgerald,

"And I am nearing seventy-four,

"Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden-tree,
And while your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand and knee,"

when he was visited by Tennyson in 1876. The poet was amused by "old Fitz" who had now turned to gentleman-farming. In the lines,

While you have touch'd at seventy-five", indicate the age of these life-long friends. In Fitzgerald's letter to Fanny Kemble, dated September 21st, 1876, he writes:
"Who should send in his card to me last week, but the poet himself -- he and his elder son Hallam passing through Woodbridge from a town in Norfolk. 'Dear old Fitz', ran the card in pencil, 'we are passing thro'.' I had not seen him for twenty years -- he looked much the same, except for his fallen locks; and what really surprised me was, that we fell at once into the old humour, as if we had been parted twenty days instead of so many years. I suppose this is a sign of old age -- not altogether desirable. But so it was. He stayed two days, and we went over the same old grounds of debate, told some of the old stories, and all was well' suppose I may never see him again."1



The poem, "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After", takes the reader back to Tennyson's boyhood, not made in imagination alone, but in actual fact. He states:

"Wander'd back to living boyhood while I heard the curfews call,
I myself so close to death, and death itself in Locksley Hall".

He presents the immature emotions of his youth, the characteristics of a thoughtless boy. In "Locksley Hall", we have the impetuous boy-lover; in the second "Locksley Hall", we have the same boy grown old. The hero attempts the difficult task of tracing the development and change of himself. The nucleus of the poem is contained in these two couplets:

"In the hall there hangs a painting -- Amy's arms about my neck -Happy children in a sunbeam sitting on the ribs of wreck.

In my life there was a picture, she had clasped my neck and flown:

I was left within the shadow sitting on the wreck alone."

In the early years of Tennyson's life, he believed that man was master of his fate. Later it changes to:

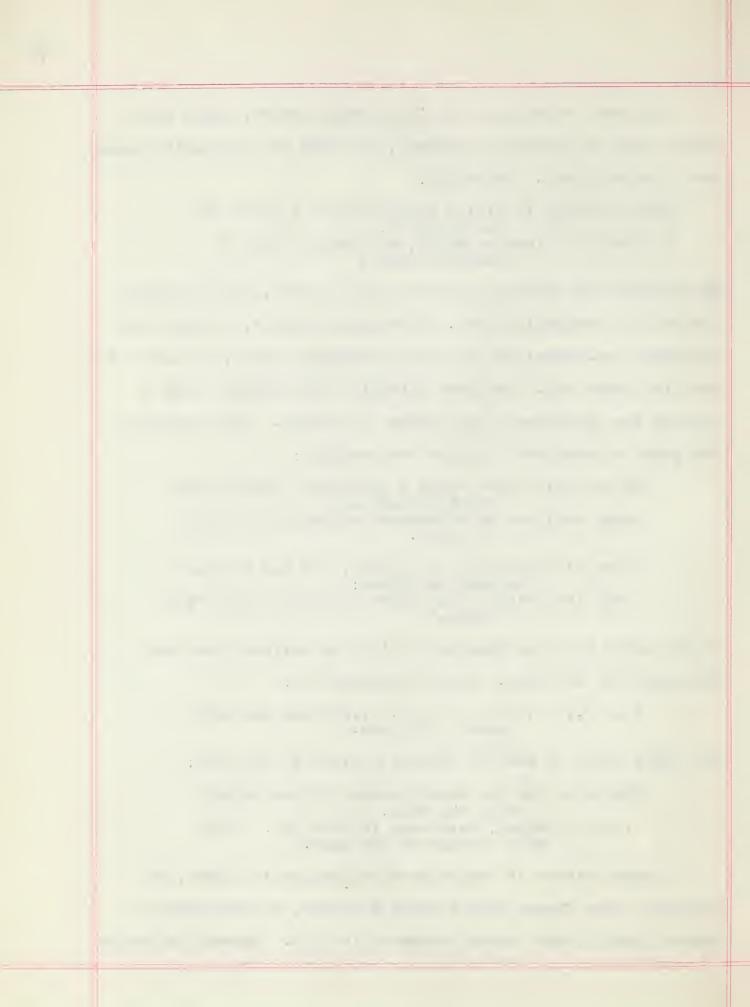
".....for man can half-control his doom."

His final faith is seen in these two lines of the poem:

"Forward, let the stormy moment fly and mingle with the Past.

I that loathed, have come to love him. Love will conquer at the last."

A poem written at the request of Tennyson's friend, Mr. Kinglake, "The Charge of the Heavy Brigade", is dedicated to General Hambly, who visited Aldworth in 1873. Raymond MacDonald



Alden writes: "This poem, dealing with an instant in the same battle of Balaclava in which occurred the tragic 'Charge of the Light Brigade' seems to me to be a finer ballad than the better known companion piece." The Scarlett who is referred to in the poem was in command of the charge. Colonel A. Elliot, who had been there with Scarlett writes: "Of course I am proud to be mentioned again in connection with that ride into the Russian column, and to be associated with the memory of my dear old chief. It is an honour in every sense. I read the ballad (or poem) with a renewal of that blood-rising which I recognized on the day when we wheeled into line, and started to meet the big foe above us on that hill-side, now twenty-eight years ago, for the sketch is very graphic, and fine, and worthy of the Laureate."2

"The 'three hundred' who made this famous charge were the Scots, Greys, and the 2nd squadron of the Inniskillings, the remainder of the 'Heavy Brigade' subsequently dashing up to their support.

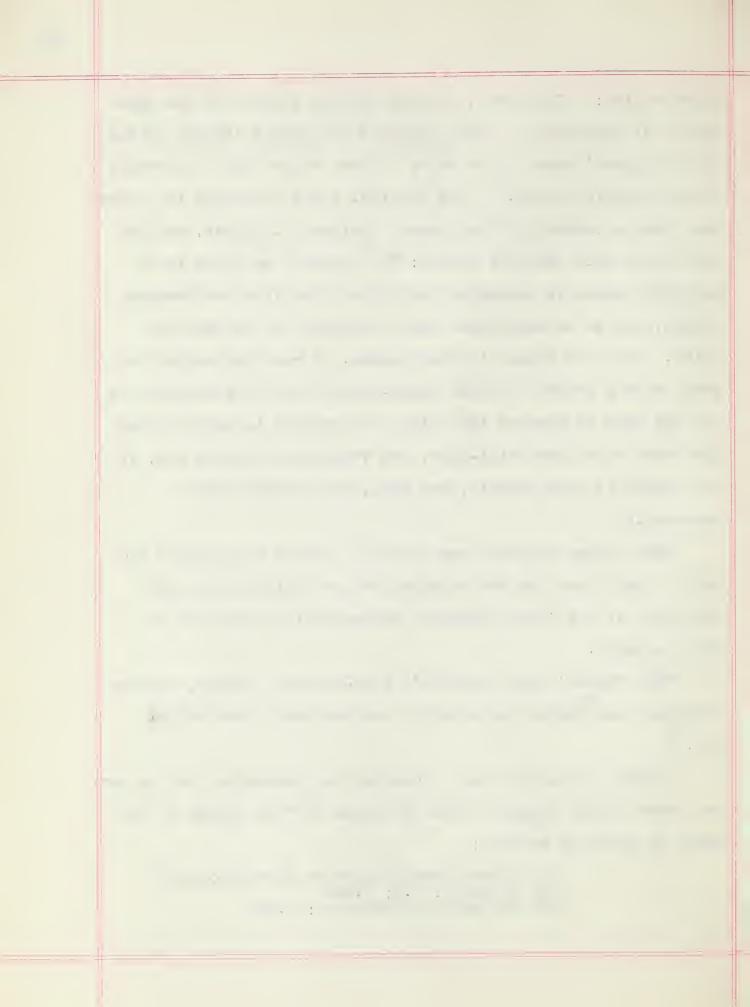
"The 'three' were Scarlett's aide-de-camp, Elliot, and the trumpeter and Shegog the orderly, who had been close behind him."3

As was usually the case, Tennyson was accused of loving war.

He answers these charges in the Epilogue of "The Charge of the Heavy Brigade" by writing:

<sup>(1)</sup> Alfred Tennyson; How to Know Him; p.67

<sup>(2)</sup> A Memoir: v.2; p.298
(3) The Works of Tennyson: p.557



".....he needs must fight
To make true peace his own,
He needs must combat might with might,
Or Might would rule alone;
And who love War for War's own sake
Is fool, or crazed, or worse."

The Poet Laureate closes with an explanation of the part a poet may play, stating:

"And here the Singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead
'The song that nerves a nation's heart,
Is in itself a deed.'"

The sonnet, "To Macready", was addressed to the man of the same name on the occasion of his leaving the stage.

"Farewell, Macready, since to-night we part; Full-handed thunders often have confess'd Thy power, well-used to move the public breast."

No longer will Macready hear the applause of the audience, as he had planned to retire.



# Chapter IX

The group of poems, entitled "Demeter and Other Poems", was dedicated to Lord and Lady Dufferin, who had shown so much kindness to Lionel Tennyson during his illness in India. Lionel contracted jungle-fever while shooting in Assam. On his return to Calcutta, he fell dangerously ill, and never recovered. Returning home, he died en route. In the opening poem, "To the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava", there is a reference to his death. "He passed away peacefully at three in the afternoon of April 20th. The burial service was at nine that same evening, under a great silver moon. The ship stopped: and the coffin was lowered into a phosphorescent sea." This is recorded in:

"When that within the coffin fell, Fell -- and flashed into the Red Sea."

The poem, "To Ulysses", is dedicated to the memory of Gifford Palgrave. "Ulysses" was the title of a volume of Palgrave's
essays. He died without an opportunity of seeing this piece.
The poet writes of Palgrave's work:

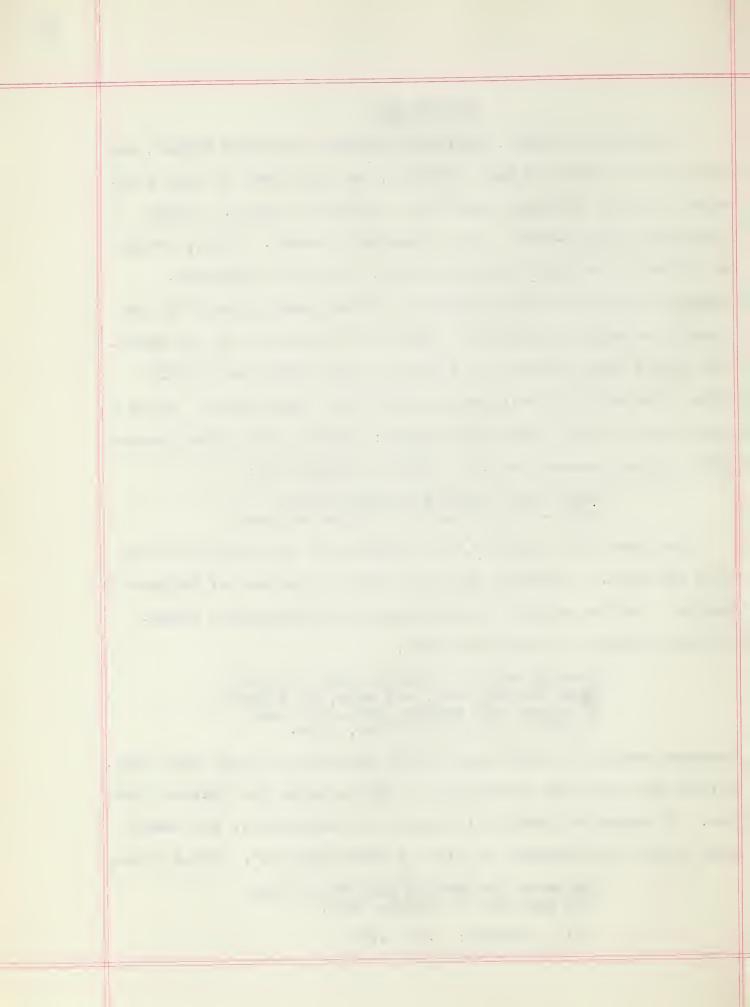
"Through which I followed line by line Your lending hand, and came, my friend, To prize your various book, and send A gift of slenderer value, mine."

Tennyson records a visit paid him by Garibaldi, in the year 1864.

Alfred was very much interested in the struggle for Italian freedom. In memory of Garibaldi's visit to Farringford, the Tennysons asked the statesman to plant a "Wellingtonia". These lines,

"Or watch the waving pine which here The warrior of Caprera set",

(1) A Memoir: v.2; p.323



now become clear. In the introduction of Hallam Tennyson's collected poems, the author states: "He (Garibaldi) came here and smoked his cigar in my little room and we had a half hour's talk in English, tho' I doubt he understood me perfectly, and his meaning was often obscure to me."1

The next poem is dedicated "To Mary Boyle", whose maiden name was Audrey Tennyson. There is a reference to Lady Alford in:

"In memory with your Marian gone to rest."

The stanza,

"All flaming, made an English homestead Hell -These hands of mine
Have helpt to pass a bucket from the well
Along the line".

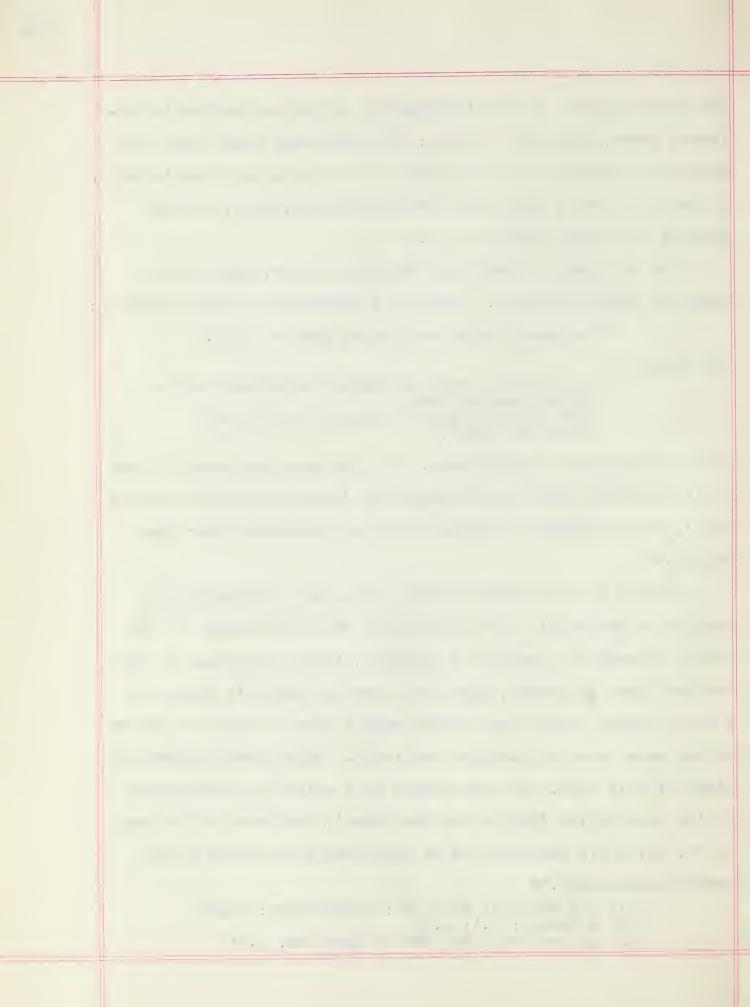
has a biographical significance. "In the poem addressed to Mary Boyle my father tells how he helped to 'hand the bucket from the well', and to quench a conflagration in a homestead near Cambridge."2

"Merlin and the Gleam" stands out as an autobiographical outline of Tennyson's life, tracing it from the attempt of his youth, through the "period of silence", then a reference to the various types of poetry, past the sorrow of Hallam's death, to finally emerge in the last stanza with a plea to youth to follow in the same track of idealism and faith. Says Raymond MacDonald Alden of this work: "His own career as a writer he interpreted in the poem called 'Merlin and the Gleam', published at the age of 80, which his son tells us he hoped would even make a biography unnecessary."3

(2) A Memoir: v.l; p.41

<sup>(1)</sup> The Works of Tennyson:introduction:p.XLIV

<sup>(3)</sup> Alfred Tennyson; How To Know Him: p.51



In his earliest boyhood days, Tennyson felt the spirit of poetry which is appealing to him in the first stanza:

"I am Merlin,
And I am dying,
I am Merlin
Who follow The Gleam."

The Poet Laureate was to be aided in his work by "Him who is invisible," helping Tennyson through trials and difficulties.

The poetry of his youth was reflected in the second stanza:

"When over the valley, In early summers, Over the mountain, On human faces, And all around me, Moving to Melody Floated The Gleam."

At the beginning of Alfred's carreer, he was to receive some harsh criticism. It is this criticism which is referred to in the next stanza:

"Once at the croak of a Raven
who crost it,
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic,
And deaf to the melody,
Snarl'd at and cursed me."

The inward voice still urged Tennyson on, and in the fourth stanza he turns to:

".....wraiths of the mountain And rolling of dragons By warble of water, Or cataract music Of falling torrents."

The above is suggestive of the trip to the Pyrenees with Arthur Hallam.

Tennyson then began to write about country life and country folk, and again we see traces of the poet's knowledge of:
(1) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.995



"Pasture and plowland, Innocent maidens, Garrulous children, Homestead and harvest."

Striving for a philosophy of his own, Tennyson wrote about heroic actions and human love:

".....with a melody Stronger and statelier Led me at length To the city and palace of Arthur the King."

This stanza recalls the time when Tennyson wrote the "Idylls of the King."

The death of Arthur Hallam darkened the career of the Poet Laureate and now we have in stanza VII:

"Clouds and darkness Closed upon Camelot Arthur had vanished."

The Gleam eventually helped Tennyson through this period of the poet's struggle with doubt.

The influence of Arthur Hallam's death on Tennyson's work became evident in stanza VIII. That he was able to overcome his grief is reflected in the passage:

"And so to the land's
"Last limit I came -And can no longer,
But die rejoicing,
For thro' the magic
Of Him the Mighty,
Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers The Gleam."

From the above, we may see the earnest courage and the strong faith that Tennyson acquired in later life.



In the closing stanza, there is expressed the advice to the younger poets to:

"Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow The Gleam."



# Chapter X

My last chapter will deal with the poems of Tennyson written during the last year of his life. Very significant are these works, coming, as they do, at the twilight of a brilliant life, and still endowed with the vigor and freshness of unabated zeal. Even to his "Crossing the Bar", there is no sign of a lack of animated and spirited thought.

The first poem, "June Bracken and Heather", is explained by Tennyson in the following:

"I thought to myself I would offer this book to you This, and my love together,
To you that are seventy-seven".

The poet always sought the help of his wife. Mrs. Tennyson proved to be a real helpmate, aiding the poet in his writing, and serving as his literary critic. Tennyson had unfaltering faith in her judgment as seen in the closing lines of the poem:

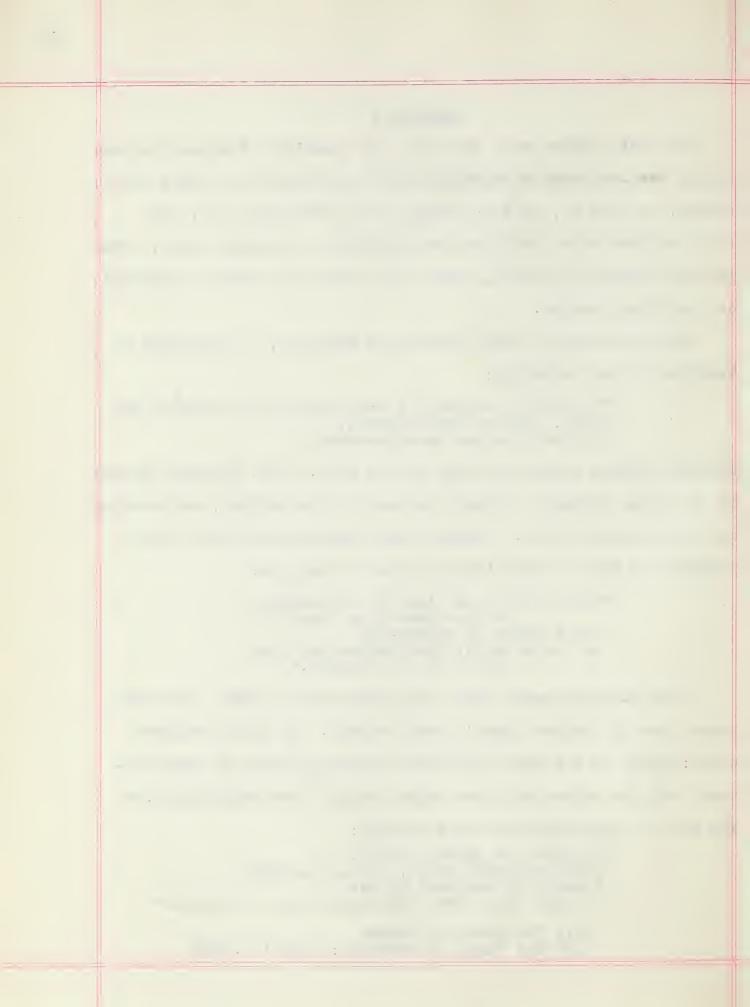
"With a faith as clear as the heights of the June-blue heaven, And a fancy as summer-new As the green of the bracken amid the gloom of the heather."

"The Bandit's Death" was first published in 1892. This was taken from Sir Walter Scott's last Journal. Of Scott Tennyson wrote: "Scott is the most chivalrous literary figure of this century, and the author with the widest range since Shakespeare."2

The poem is prefaced with these remarks:

"O great and gallant Scott,
True gentleman heart, blood, and bone,
I would it had been my lot
To have seen thee, and heard thee, and known."

(1) The Death of Oenone(2) The Works of Tennyson: notes; p.1002



Continuing to the next poem, "Riflemen Form", we see why no one could ever justly accuse Tennyson of not being loyal to the cause of England. His one secret desire was to see the mother-country in intimate contact with all her colonies. He believed that the colonies, united to the same cause, would so aid materially the whole, making the British Empire a fearless leader throughout the world. In this poem, there is an animated plea,

"Riflemen, Form, Riflemen Form!
Ready, be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, Riflemen, Riflemen form!"

"'Riflemen Form!' appeared in May in the Times after the outbreak of war between France, Piedmont, and Austria; when more than one power seemed to be prepared to take the offensive against England; and it rang like a trumpet call through the length and breadth of the Empire. It so happened that three days later an order from the War Office came out, approving of the formation of Volunteer rifle corps. To Richards, who was one of the prominent promotors of the movement, my father wrote: 'I must heartily congratulate you on your having been able to do so much for your country; and I hope that you will not cease from your labors until it is a law of the land that every male child in it shall be trained to the use of arms.'"

Coventry Patmore wrote Tennyson the following: "It will please you to hear that 'Riflemen Form!' is being responded to. I hear that four hundred clerks of the War Office alone have at once answered to the Government invitation, and on my proposing that our department should send a contingent, almost every man

(1) A Memoir: v.l; p.436

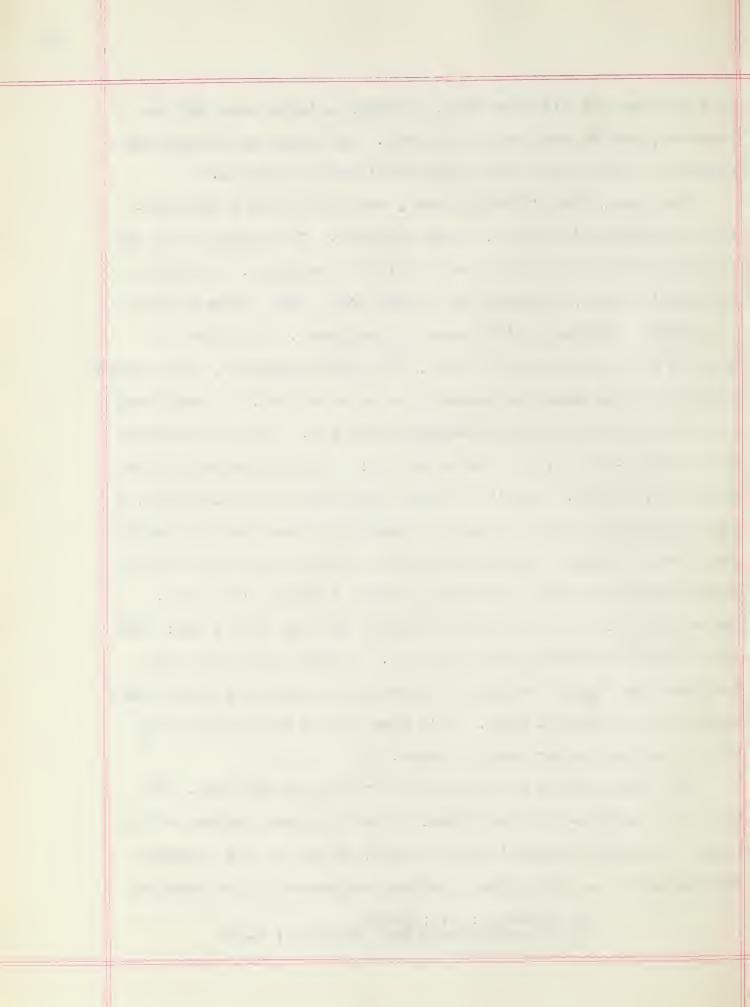


in the place put his name down, although a large cost will be incurred, and we are nearly all poor. If things go through the country at that rate, there never will be an invasion."

The poem, "The Church-Warden", was founded on a conversation of Tennyson's friend, Canon Rawnsley. It is written in the dialect current in Spilsby at the time of Tennyson. In Hallam Tennyson's diary, recorded as of June 23rd, 1890, there is this statement: "Walked on the Common (Blackdown). My father is working at his Lincolnshire poem, 'The Church-Warden', and laughed heartily at the humorous passages as he made them. It was found on two sayings which Canon Rawnsley told him. One of a Lincolnshire church-warden, who addressed him: 'There's no daub (sham) about you, I know. Thou'lt be maain and plaain and straaight, I know, but hooiver, tek my advice, doant thou saay nowt to nobody for a year or more, but crip and crawl and get along under the hedgebottoms for a bit, and the 'll maake a bishop on ye yit.' The other that of a Lincolnshire farmer who had lost a cow: 'The poor thing was bound to die, drat it. I blaam them howry owd Baptises fur it all, coming and pizening my pond by leavin' their nasty owd sins behint them. It's nowt nobbut their dippin' as did it, we may be very sartin sewer. "2

The last poem to be discussed is "Crossing the Bar". "It was in his eighty-first year that one of the most perfect of his poems, 'Crossing the Bar', was written, on one of his journeys from Aldworth to Farringford, perhaps suggested by the crossing

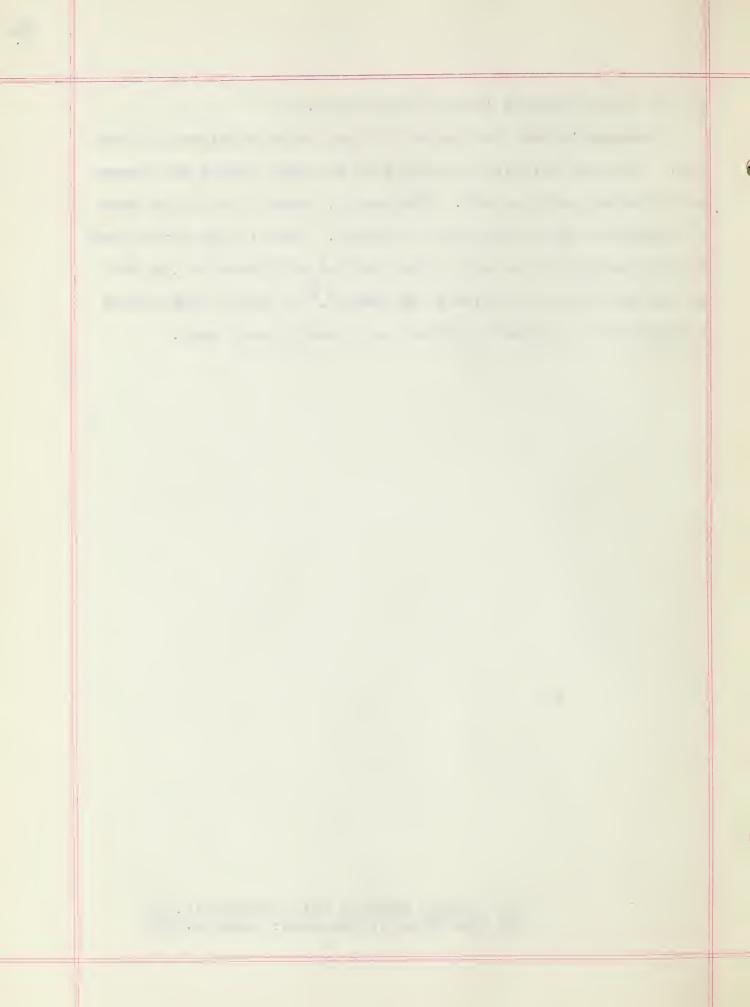
<sup>(1)</sup> A Memoir: v.l; p.437
(2) ThroughEngland With Tennyson: p.150



of the narrow channel to his island home."1

Tennyson's hope and belief in the Divine continued to the end. The poet believed the Pilot to be "that Divine and Unseen who is always guiding us". Personally, there is no other poem of Tennyson's which has such an appeal. Even if one never knew of his request to his son, "Mind you put my 'Crossing the Bar' at the end of all editions of my poems", he would immediately recognize the confident farewell of a truly great poet.

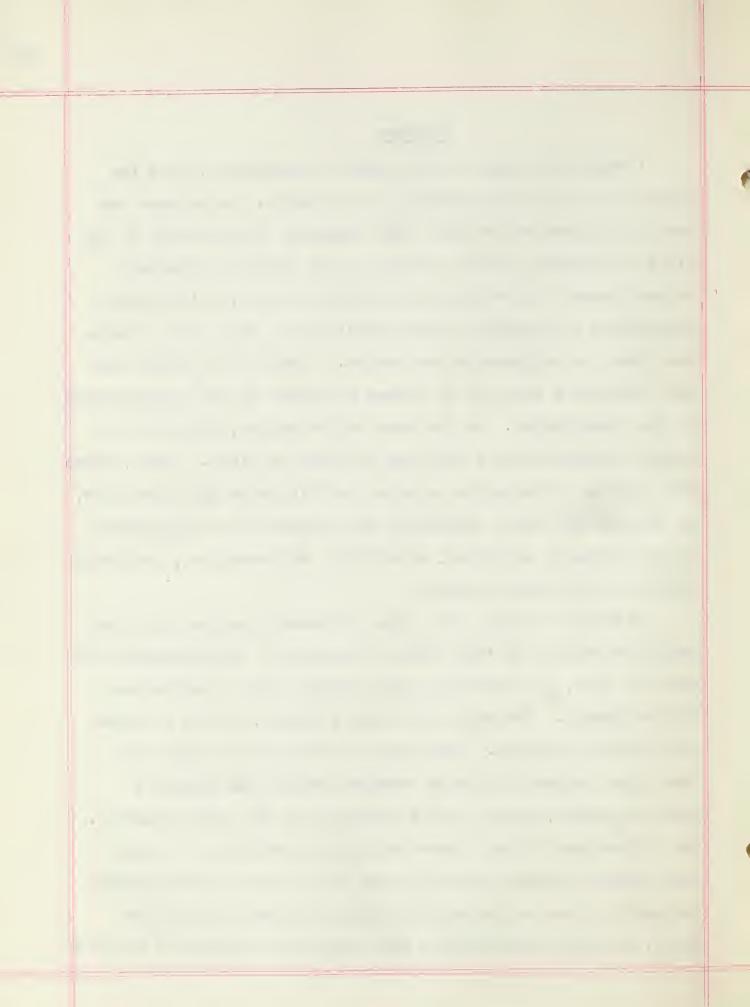
<sup>(1)</sup> Through England With Tennyson:p.150(2) The Works of Tennyson: notes;p.1004



### Summary

I began this thesis with a short introduction, with the purpose of stating the problem to be treated. An attempt was made to illustrate how there were numerous circumstances in the lives of Tennyson and his friends in the poetry of Tennyson. In many cases, the references found were direct, while others presupposed a knowledge of the poet's life. Where the allusion was clear, no explanation was needed. I went on to sketch the Poet Laureate's life, as it seemed necessary in the understanding of the dissertation. As has been stated before, Tennyson was really representative of the age in which he lived. Hence, there was inserted a discussion of what the "Victorian Age" stood for, so that we may better comprehend the influence of this period on the literary, political, scientific, philosophical, and social aspects of Tennyson's poetry.

As far as possible, the order followed coincides with the MacMillan edition of "The Works of Tennyson". Chronological for the most part, the selections are prefaced with a dedication "To the Queen". The early poems are affected, due to a desire for melodious harmony. Poems such as "Isabel" and others of this type, suggest an almost overdone attempt to produce a pleasing rhythm, paying little attention to the subject-matter. The impressions of youth were strongly in evidence. In these early poems, Tennyson served notice that he was to help elevate the poet's place in the world of affairs, when, in his "The Poet", he stated emphatically that poetry was not only a source of



pleasure, but served a serious purpose as well. He followed out this belief in his writing, treating subjects concerning war, politics, and philosophy.

At this time, Tennyson was severely criticised; he was accused of being effeminate; he was often snickered at for being puerile in his forms of expression. These criticisms were felt feeply. In the poet's 1832 volume, we find a greater exactness for details, This desire for more detailed descriptions is seen in "The Miller's Daughter", "The Palace of Art", and "The Two Voices". Indicative of what is to come, we see Tennyson's poetry becoming less restrained and no longer formal.

Arthur Hallam's death brought about the period often referred to as "The Ten Years of Silence". The criticism that Tennyson was subject to was the cause of his shunning his friends at this time. Seen rarely, the poet was too much alone. In trying to forget, the Poet Laureate wandered from place to place. When he does write, his poetry is influenced by the tender longing expressed in:

"Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of day that is dead
Will never come back to me."

Woman's place in the world was not yet determined in many aspects. In "The Princess", Tennyson deals with this all-important question, writing this poem in a burlesque manner. Other poems of this section reveal the alertness of the poet in his surroundings. Politics interested him. Interpreting that fatal order given at Balaclava, the poet definitely expresses his



opinion in "The Charge of the Light Brigade", when he writes thus;
"Some-one had blunder'd". Poet Laureate, though he was, he did
not hesitate to reprimand the English people in "The Third of
February" for apparently condoning Louis Napoleon.

When one know Tennyson's life, he sees in "In Memoriam" many references to Arthur Hallam. The whole poem is filled with an account of the poet's loss of his friend. It tells of the terrific strain of the writer in his struggle to readjust himself to a life without Hallam. In my account, I have attempted to divide the poem into its various parts, each division different in the treatment of the ever changing moods.

"Maud" is a mono-drama, the author influenced in his descriptions of nature by his island home on the Isle of Wight.

While the hero expresses his thoughts on the commercialism of the time, favoring war in its place, we are inclined to hold these as the personal viewpoints of the author. In the poems of this period, we are able to see Tennyson's ability to weave a poem around such an incident as is found in "The Sisters". The poet loved the British Empire. "The Defence of Lucknow" illustrates this. Tennyson's heart must have beat rapidly when he wrote:

"Hold it for fifteen days! we have held it for eighty-seven!

And ever aloft on the palace roof the banner of England blew."

In the poems, "Enoch Arden" and "Sea Dreams", we see the poet interested in the common ordinary affairs of the poorer class.

"Sea Dreams" glorifies honest labor: "Enoch Arden" shows Tennyson's



knowledge of fishermen and of the sea. In this volume the poet uses settings drawn from his personal experiences with the working people.

Between Robert Browning and Tennyson, a bond of friendship arose. To return a compliment, Tennyson dedicated "Tiresias and Other Poems" to his friend. These poems deal in retrospect, exemplifying the friendliness of old age. "The Prologue" finds the writer visiting "Old Fitz", where they talk over days gone by. "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" tells of a visit back to scenes of younger days, treated in a philosophical manner. About "The Charge of the Heavy Brigade", General Hambly, on his visit to Aldworth is plied with questions concerning that now famous battle. Another friendly gesture is referred to in "To Macready", when the actor had made known his decision to retire from the stage.

"Demeter and Other Poems" is dedicated to Lord and Lady
Dufferin. Outstanding in this group of poems is "Merlin and the
Gleam", in which the admirer of Tennyson is able to trace the
life of the poet. "To Ulysses" is written in honor of Gifford
Palgrave. In "To Mary Boyle", there is an unmistakable reference
to his Cambridge days. His poem, "Politics", clearly advocates
his opinion on the policy of the "middle path".

At the age of 81, the poet is mentally as active as ever.

He pays a fitting tribute to his wife in "June Bracken and Heather". Experience of old age helps him to offer advice in "Church-Warden". His ever ready desire to protect the interests



of the native land is found in that dynamic poem, "Riflemen, Form!"

In the last poem Tennyson figuratively compares death to "Crossing the Bar", where the poet says:

"I hope to see my Pilot face to face."

THE END



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